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ANNEX

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THE WHIST TABLE

(Whist)
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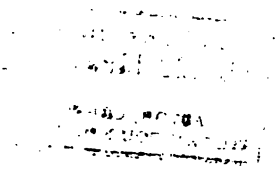

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"CAVENDISH."

Frontispiece.

THE WHIST TABLE

A TREASURY OF

Notes on the Royal Game

By "CAVENDISH," C. MOSSOP, A. C. EWALD,
CHARLES HERVEY

AND OTHER DISTINGUISHED PLAYERS

GOOD PLAY AND BAD PLAY
THE CLUB CODE OF WHIST LAWS
THE LANGUAGE OF THE CARDS
HINTS TO YOUNG PLAYERS
THE ETIQUETTE OF THE TABLE
WHIST STORIES, ANECDOTES, AND FALLACIES
SOCIAL, HUMOROUS, AND PRACTICAL JOTTINGS
ETC.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

SOLO WHIST AND ITS RULES

By ABRAHAM S. WILKS.

THE WHOLE EDITED BY "PORTLAND"

With Portraits, &c.

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
153—157, FIFTH AVENUE
1894

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PREFACE.

To vary De Quincey's humorous idea in a famous essay, "Whist considered as one of the Fine Arts" might be an appropriate title to this volume.

It draws together a great deal of information, at once curious and interesting, on the history of the Game, and the rise and progress of its modern developments.

It deals in a comprehensive manner with the laws and practice of modern Whist, and the etiquette of the Table; the hints which are useful to the young and careful player; the "points" which should be studied by the average player desirous to improve himself; as well as a great variety of crisp, pungent "jottings" on the niceties of scientific Whist—handled by experts. There are also Whist stories, anecdotes, and curiosities, which it is hoped will afford amusement, coupled with a little instruction.

On the grand, moot question of "Signals" or "Conventions," it has been the endeavour to let both sides be heard. There are the numerous and powerful advocates of Signals headed by "CAVENDISH"; there are Whist celebrities, headed by "MOGUL" and "PEMBRIDGE," who abhor such practices, as tending to sap the game; there are good players who condemn them

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in theory, but either countenance or resign themselves to a moderate use of them in practice.

When the doughty champions put on their "war paint" the struggle is keen; things become lively; strong words often pass; and a wail is heard on the decay of "the noble game."

Still, let us hope that the day has not yet come when modern Whist can be fairly defined as it has been by one humourist:—"A plentiful supply of signals and a small supply of brains!"

No other book in the language brings together such a large and varied collection of bright, practical, and suggestive material, as is here given from the pen of writers so capable of treating the subject. This much, perhaps, the editor may venture to claim, seeing that he is, in great measure, merely the "sheaf-binder." Gathering the grain has been, for some years, a source of recreation in the intervals of much sterner work.

The three admirable Essays by "CAVENDISH" speak for themselves. The great popularity of the various works on the Game by this distinguished writer, and the enthusiasm and ability which he has so long brought to bear on the Whist Editorship of *The Field*, mark him out as the "HOYLE" (perhaps he would rather be considered the younger "CLAY") of the Victorian era.

Three Portraits are given in this Volume, for the first time, which will be prized by lovers of Whist. (1) The late JAMES CLAY, formerly M.P. for Hull,

who by common consent was regarded as "The King of Whist" by the great players of yesterday. For this we are indebted to the kind aid of his son, Mr. CECIL CLAY. The original is in the possession of Miss CLAY. (2) The Frontispiece—a reduction from a large platinotype — is the finest Portrait yet taken of "CAVENDISH." For this we have received his kind assent. (3) The Portrait of Mr. CHARLES MOSSOP, the veteran Editor of "THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS." This he has kindly allowed from an original in the possession of the family.

The famous "WESTMINSTER PAPERS," which stand so high in the estimation of all lovers of Chess and Whist, have been laid freely under contribution with the cordial consent of their Editor and Proprietor, Mr. CHARLES MOSSOP.

This distinguished authority on Whist, Baccarat, and other games, has thus enabled the Editor to popularise many valuable papers now almost inaccessible—out of those rare quartos which for eleven years embodied so much humour and wisdom on the Royal Game of Whist.

The Editor has also to acknowledge with thanks the permission kindly accorded by "MOGUL" to use his "Protest" and neat classification of Signals.

Fugitive literature has also been scanned and some interesting notes and strictures drawn from scattered papers by writers of ability—such as those penned by that brilliant Astronomer, Mathematician and fine

Whist-player, the late Mr. R. A. Proctor. In these cases a reference has been given to the volume of the periodical quoted, for the use of those who may wish to study the whole of the original article.

The Chapter on "Solo Whist," by Mr. Abraham S. Wilks, brings up to date a variety of the game which seems to have fascinated our younger generation of players. The "Old School" look at it somewhat askance as a dangerous hybrid—a game with pitfalls for the impetuous or unwary "plunger," and one which does not exhibit the calm, refined science of the ancient "noble game." Mr. Wilks, who may be regarded as the authoritative exponent of this popular form of play, has here added every safeguard which his experience can suggest in the management of "Solo Whist," so as to reduce to a minimum any tendency to irregularity or temptation to excessive speculation. In connection with this chapter special thanks are due to Messrs. Chatto & Windus, who published the Author's Work on "Solo Whist," for their friendly co-operation in the matter.

"The Club Code of Short Whist" was originally framed by the late John Loraine Baldwin in 1864, and by him submitted to many leading Clubs, who gave their adhesion to these ninety-one rules. It may be useful to note that at "The Portland Club," the home *par éminence* of British Whist, the "Code" is still in force without variation.

"Portland."

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THE WHIST TABLE.

HISTORICAL NOTES ON OUR NATIONAL CARD GAME.

BY "CAVENDISH."
Author of the "Laws and Principles of Whist."

IT is remarkable that our national card game, Whist, should be, so to speak, a fluke. This game, second to none as an indoor amusement, has been built out of very simple materials. At first, played only by low sharpers (as we shall presently show), it has become, by successive changes, almost the only card game of civilised life. Little did the card-players of a former era dream of the "science" that lay hidden in the now obsolete game of "trump," since developed into the similar game (as regards its construction) of whist! Little did they imagine that a game so lowly and so despised would, ere long, become *the* card pastime of those most favoured by birth and intellect.

The very obscurity of the origin of the allied games of triumph or trump, whisk, whisk-and-swabbers, ruff-and-honours, slamm, and whist proper, throws difficulty in the way of chronicling their early history.

The records, such as they are, lie scattered here and there; indeed, they exist principally in the form of occasional mentions and allusions, from which, by collating, the patient inquirer may infer somewhat of the nature of the games themselves. Thus, to commence with the game of trump, to which belongs the honour of being the direct ancestor of Whist. Trump was played at least as early as the time of Henry VIII. Curiously enough, the first known mention of the game in England occurs in a sermon "On the Card," preached by the celebrated Latimer, at St. Edmund's Church, Cambridge, the Sunday before Christmas, 1529. The embryo bishop and martyr thus illustrated his text:—"And whereas you are about to celebrate Christmas in playing at cards, I intend, by God's grace, to deal unto you Christ's cards, wherein you shall perceive Christ's rule. The game that we shall play at shall be called the *triumph*, which, if it be well played at, he that dealeth shall win; the players shall likewise win; and the standers and lookers upon shall do the same, insomuch that there is no man willing to play at this triumph with these cards but they shall be all winners and no losers."

It should be borne in mind that this discourse was delivered in all solemnity and earnestness. That a parallel between a game at cards and the rule of the Lord could be considered to be in good taste, exhibits a bluntness of feeling which contrasts singularly with the more refined habits of thought of the present day.

The game of trump (*la triomphe*) is included by Rabelais in the long list of some two hundred and thirty games that Gargantua played. Of these games, the first portion only is believed to relate to cards.

Douce, in his "Illustrations of Shakespeare," somewhat hastily concludes, from finding trump in his list, that we derived the game from a French source. But the appearance of "The History of Gargantua and Pantagruel" was posterior to that of Latimer's sermon. Until the year 1530, Rabelais was a monk. He then threw aside his religious habit and studied medicine at Montpelier. After spending some time at that school he removed to Lyons, where some books of his famous history first saw the light. The history was finished about 1545; and certainly none of it was published till some years after the date of Latimer's sermon (1529).

Berni, in his "Capitolo del Gioco della Primera" (chapter on the game of primera), published at Rome in 1526, enumerates several card games, and among them "trionfi," which he says was only played by the peasants. If "trionfi" is the same game as "trump," then the earliest known mention of the game must be allowed to be Italian. In Florio's "Queen Anna's New World of Words, or Dictionarie of the Italian and English Tongues" (1611), the game is not called "trionfi," but "triomphetto."

In endeavouring to settle the origin of trump it has hitherto been overlooked that there were two distinct games of trump played in the seventeenth century, and, for aught known to the contrary, in the preceding one. The game of "triomphe," or trump, described in the "Academy of Play," by the Abbé Bellecour, is substantially the same as the game of "French ruff," described by Cotton in "The Compleat Gamester; or, Instructions How to Play at Billiards, Trucks, Bowls, and Chess, together with all manner of usual and most gentile games, either on cards or dice. 1674." Now,

as all card-players are aware, ruff and trump are convertible terms; so the game called triomphe by the Abbé may well be translated French ruff. In addition to the game of French ruff, "The Compleat Gamester" also treats of "English ruff-and-honours." English ruff may be assumed to be a synonym for "trump" just as French ruff is for "triomphe." The games of English and French ruff were very dissimilar. English ruff was very like Whist, while French ruff was a minor game—a sort of mixture of loo and écarté. The fact of their being different seems to throw a light on the question of the origin of the game of trump. French ruff or triomphe was probably, as its name implies, of French birth; while, by a parity of reasoning, English ruff or trump was of English origin.

During the latter half of the sixteenth century the game of trump is not unfrequently referred to, more especially in old plays, where one would naturally expect to find mention of such domestic incidents as a friendly game at cards. In "Gammer Gurton's Needle," a comedy, first printed in 1551, old Dame Chat thus invites some friends to a game at trump:—

"What, Diccon? Come nere, ye be no stranger:
We be fast set at trump, man, hard by the fyre;
Thou shalt set on the king if thou come a little nyer.
Come hither Dol. Dol, sit down and play this game,
And as thou sawest me do, see do thou even the same.
There is five trumps besides the queene, the hindmost thou shall find her.
Take heed of Sim Glover's wife, she hath an eye behind her."

Sim Glover's wife was, doubtless, a "sharp" player, and probably could overlook her adversary's cards on occasion.

In Decker's, or Dekkar's "Belman of London," printed about the same time as the last, it is stated that "Deceipts [are] practised even in the fayrest and most civill companies, at primero, sant, maw, trump, and such like games."

In Eliot's "Fruits for the French" (1593) trump is called "a verie common alehouse game"; and Rice, in his "Infective against Vices" (printed before 1600), mentions "renouncing the trompe and comming in againe," as a common sharper's trick. Even in those days it was not considered the correct thing to revoke on purpose.

It is generally known, by well-read people, that the game of Whist is not mentioned by Shakespeare, nor by any writer of the Elizabethan period. But it is not so generally known that the game of trump is mentioned by Shakespeare. The game is called by him *triumph;* and from this circumstance, and also from its being introduced as a punning allusion, the passage might be read over and over again without the intention of the writer being noticed, except by those who recognise in the word "triumph" the old spelling of "trump."

In "Antony and Cleopatra," Act iv., Scene 12, Antony says:—

> "My good *knave*, Eros, now thy captain is
> Even such a body; here I am Antony:
> Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my *knave*.
> I made these wars for Egypt; and the *queen*
> Whose *heart*, I thought, I had, for she had mine;
> Which, whilst it was mine, had annexed unto't
> A million more, now lost,—she, Eros, has
> *Packed cards* with Cæsar, and *false played* my glory
> Unto an enemy's *triumph*."

Douce, we believe, was the first to point out the

real meaning of the passage. He says, "One would really suppose that Shakespeare had written this speech just after having lost a game at cards, and before the manner in which it had been played was out of his mind." Ye who seek to honour the Bard by insisting that he knew everything and did everything, add to your list that he was a "trump" player, and he would have been a Whist-player, only in his day the game had not been invented.

There is abundant evidence to show that "trump" is a corruption of the word "triumph." In addition to the instances already adduced, we may quote two others. In Cotgrave's "French and English Dictionary" (1611), we find "*Triomphe*, the card game called ruffe or trump." And Seymour, in his "Court Gamester," first published about 1720, says, "The term trump comes from a corruption of the word triumph, for wherever they are they are attended with conquest."

By some writers trump is reckoned as of equal antiquity with primero, but there does not appear to be any warrant for this assumption; and tradition points to primero as the oldest known card game with numeral cards, such as we now use. The facetious Sir John Harrington, in his punning epigram "On the Games that have been in Request at the Court," says:—

> "The first game was the best, when, free from crime,
> The courtly gamesters all were in their *prime*."

And Samuel Rogers, availing himself of poetic license, represents the followers of Columbus as playing at primero during their voyage to the West Indies, in 1492:—

> "Round at Primero sate a whiskered band;"

And he states in a note that primero was the game then in fashion.

The mode of playing at trump is lost. Douce says it was played by two against two, and sometimes by three against three, and that it resembled our modern Whist. He, however, gives no authority for this statement. The Hon. Daines Barrington, in the "Archæologia" (1717), cautiously says, "It may possibly be supposed that the game of trump was the same as whisk." Probably it was the same with a difference—that is to say, it was similar. From the passage in "Gammer Gurton's Needle," already quoted, it would seem that the players set or staked on certain cards:—

"Thou shalt *set* on the King."

The meaning of the line—

"There is five trumps besides the queene, the hindmost thou shalt find her,"

is by no means clear. It may, perhaps, be explained on the assumption that Dol's hand contained five trumps, the queen being sorted behind the others.

It may fairly be assumed that the games of ruff and trump, if not identical, were very much alike. In Cotgrave's "Dictionary," already quoted, we have "the card game called ruffe or trump." Nares, in his "Glossary," says that ruff and trump are the same. "Trump; a game at cards, also called *ruff*." "Even now," he continues, "to trump and to ruff a card are, in the use of some persons, synonymous." They are, however, enumerated separately by Taylor the Water-poet (so called because he was apprenticed to a water-

man), in speaking of the games at which the prodigal may squander his money. The passage is remarkable also in containing the name of the game of whisk, this being the earliest mention of it known to us :—

"The prodigall's estate, like to a flux,
The mercer, draper, and the silkman suckes;
The tailor, millainer, dogs, drabs, and dice,
Trey-trip, or passage, or the most at thrice.
At irish, tick-tacke, doublets, draughts, or chesse,
He flings his money free with carelessnesse.
At novum, mumchance, mischance (chuse ye which),
At one-and-thirty, or at poor-and-rich,
Ruffe, *slam*, *trump*, noddy, *whisk*, hole, sant, new cut,
Unto the keeping of four knaves he'll put
His whole estate; at loadum, or at gleeke,
At tickle-me-quickly he's a merry greek;
At primifisto, post-and-payre, primero,
Maw, whip-her-ginney, he's a lib'ral hero;
At my-sow-pigged: but (reader, never doubt ye),
He's skilled in all games, except looke-about ye.
Bowles, shove-groat, tennis, no game comes amiss,
His purse a nurse for anybody is;
Caroches, coaches, and tobacconists,
All sorts of people freely from his fists
His vaine expenses daily sucke and soake,
And he himself suckes only drinke and smoake.
And thus the prodigall, himselfe alone
Gives sucke to thousands, and himself suckes none."*

Whisk or Whist obtains a place in the first edition of Cotton (1674). Cotton says, "Ruff-and-honours (alias slamm) and Whist are games so commonly known in England, in all parts thereof, that every child almost of eight years old [!] hath a competent knowledge of that recreation, and, therefore, I am unwilling to speak anything more of them than this, that there may be a great deal of art used in dealing [!] and playing at

* Taylor's Motto, "*Et habeo, et careo, et curo.*" 12mo. 1621.

these games, which differ very little one from the other."

The science of the game was, of course, very imperfectly understood, or, rather, was scarcely understood at all at that time. Cotton advises, in playing the cards, so to use your judgment or discretion as to make the best even of a bad market; for "though you have but mean cards in your own hand, yet you may play them so suitable to those in your partner's hand that he may either trump them or play the best of that suit on the board." By keeping a "special eye on what cards are played out, you may know what to play if you lead or how to trump securely and advantageously."

Ruff-and-honours was played by four persons, two being partners against the others. Each had twelve cards dealt him, four being left undealt. The top card of these four was turned up for trumps. The player who held ace of trumps had the privilege of putting out four cards from his hand and of taking in the four left undealt. The game was nine-up, and honours and tricks reckoned as at Long Whist. Calling was permitted at the point of eight, just as at Long Whist.

The Whist of that day was very much the same as ruff-and-honours, only the deuces were taken out of the pack, and consequently there was no stock; the trump was the bottom card, as now. The game was nine, and tricks and honours counted as at ruff-and-honours. Whist must have been a very strange game (according to present notions) played nine-up and with only forty-eight cards!

It is greatly to be regretted that as yet ruff-and-honours and Whist were principally played by the lower

classes. It is not to be wondered at that these games were not played solely on their merits. Cotton devotes several pages to an exposure of different ways of cheating. Players, he says, who can overlook their adversaries' hands, or even get a "pretty glimpse" of their partners' hands, have a great advantage. By winking or by the fingers they may discover to their partners what honours they hold; and there are several ways of securing an honour at the bottom when dealing. "Some have a way to slick with a slick-stone all the honours very smooth," then, "by laying a forefinger on the top indifferent hard, and giving a slurring jerk, the rest will slip off from the slickt card." By this means a sharper would avoid cutting an honour to his adversary. Cotton sums up thus, "It is impossible to show you all the cheats of this game, since your cunning gamester is always studying new inventions to deceive the ignorant."

From ruff-and-honours we proceed to whisk-and-swabbers. Whisk-and-swabbers is mentioned by Feilding as having been played by Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great in 1682. Feilding speaks of the game as being then greatly in vogue. Swift, in his "Fates of Clergymen" (1728), says the clergy "used to play at whisk-and-swabbers." Whether whisk-and-swabbers and ruff-and-honours were merely synonyms for one another, as Chatto suggests, or whether there were points of difference between the two games, we are unable to decide.

The etymologies of the terms ruff, swabbers, and even of whisk or Whist, have never been satisfactorily made out. Daines Barrington says on this point, that in the beginning of the eighteenth century whisk was

" played with what were called swabbers, which were possibly so termed, because they who had certain cards in their hand were entitled to take up a share of the stake, independent of the general event of the game. The fortunate, therefore, clearing the board of this extraordinary stake, might be compared by seamen to the *swabbers* (or cleaners of the deck), in which sense the term is still used." We think this conjecture very far-fetched.

Chatto's suggestion, though ingenious, still, we think, leaves the etymology of swabbers unsettled. He writes, "As the game of whisk-and-swabbers was nearly the same as the still older one of ruff-and-honours, it would seem that the two former terms were merely the ludicrous synonyms of the latter — introduced perhaps about the time that ruffs were going out of fashion, and when the honours, represented by the court cards, were at a discount. The fact that a game, so interesting in itself, should be slighted, as it was by the higher orders, from the reign of Charles II. to that of George II., would seem to intimate that they were well aware of the ridicule intended to be conveyed by its popular name of whisk-and-swabbers. Looking at the conjunction of these terms, and at their primary meaning (a whisk, a small kind of besom; a swab or swabber, a kind of mop), there can scarcely be a doubt that the former was the original of Whist, the name under which the game subsequently obtained an introduction into fashionable society, the swabbers having been deposed and the honours restored. In playing the game, swabbers seem to have signified either the honours or the points gained through holding them. At the older game of ruff-and-honours, ruff signified a

trump. It would appear that when the ruff was called a whisk, in ridicule of the ruff proper, the honours or points gained through them were, in concatenation, accordingly designated swabbers."

If the word whisk is not derived by substitution for the word ruff, it is a curious coincidence that both of them should signify the same thing, namely, a piece of lawn used as an ornament to the dress. In the "Annals of Love" (1672), whisk is used in this sense—

> "No; you're deceiv'd when you suppose
> Your wife will part with whisk or cloaths;"

and in "Wit and Drollery" (1682)—

> "I laced her gown, I pinned her whisk."

In "Hudibras Redivivus" (1706), we have—

> "In ruffs, and fifty other ways,
> Their wrinkled necks were covered o'er
> With whisks of lawn, by grannums wore."

The commonly received opinion that Whist means *silence* has the support of the best modern etymologists. As long ago as 1674, Cotton, in the "Compleat Gamester," states that "the game of Whist is so called from the silence that is to be observed in the play." Seymour, in his edition of the "Compleat Gamester" (1734), says—"Whist, vulgarly called whisk. The original denomination of this game is Whist, or the silent game at cards." And again—"Talking is not allowed at Whist; the very word implies 'hold your tongue.'" Dr. Johnson does not say positively that this is the origin, but he adopts the view to the extent of explaining Whist to be "a game at cards, requiring

close attention and silence." Nares, in his "Glossary," well remarks that he knows "the extreme fallaciousness of the science of etymology when based on mere similarity of sound"; nevertheless, under the head of "Whist, an interjection commanding silence," he adds, "that the name of the game of Whist is derived from this is known, I presume, to all who play or do not play."

After the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the term swabbers seems to have been dropped altogether: our national card game became known by the name simply of Whist, and the points of the game rose from nine to ten. Cotton, in the edition of 1709, says the game is "nine in all"; in that of 1721 he says "ten in all"; but in 1725 he goes back to nine again. Shortly after this Cotton's treatise was incorporated with that of Seymour, and "rectified according to the present standard of play." In Seymour's edition of 1734, and in all subsequent editions, the game is said to be ten-up. And it appears likely that simultaneously with the change from nine to ten, the practice of playing with the entire pack, instead of with but forty-eight cards, obtained. It was about this time (1728) that the first Lord Folkestone and his party used to play Whist *scientiæ causâ* at the Crown Coffee-house in Bedford Row. This is the first mention we have of Whist being played scientifically. It must be recollected that in those days Bedford Row was an aristocratic neighbourhood, and that the coffee-houses were in many respects equivalent to our present clubs. Lord Folkestone's party may therefore be taken to represent the club-players of that epoch; and Long Whist may be said now to have become fashionable. It is very inte-

resting to watch the gradual rise of the game from the ale-house and the servants' hall to the drawing-rooms of country squires and parsons, and thence to town, to the clubs and to the house of the great.

From 1728 to 1743, when Hoyle's first edition was published, is only a short step. Hardly anything is known of Edmond Hoyle's early life. It is said that he was born in 1672; it is said that he was educated for the bar; and other statements have been made concerning him, all of which lack proof. He became famous only when he published his "Short Treatise on the Game of Whist." Only one copy of the first edition has been traced. It is in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. The book was entered at Stationers' Hall, and the record signed by Hoyle as sole proprietor of the copyright in November, 1742.

In the "Short Treatise" we have evidence that Hoyle gave lessons in Whist. He says he has framed an artificial memory for Whist-players, which he will communicate upon payment of a guinea; and that he will explain any case in the book upon payment of one guinea more. The artificial memory is added in later editions. It merely consists of a mode of arranging the suits varying with the circumstances of the hand. In our judgment it is of no practical value. Mnemonical systems do not find favour with accomplished Whist-players.

Hoyle is several times referred to by contemporary writers as teaching Whist. In the "Rambler," of May, 1750, a young lady thus complains of being made to play at Whist. "Papa made me drudge at Whist till I was tired; and Mr. Hoyle, when he had not given me above forty lessons, said I was one of his best

scholars." In the "Humours of Whist," published in 1743, Hoyle, under the pseudonym of Professor Whiston, is introduced as giving instructions in Whist. Alderman Jobber is much incensed at his son's taking lessons of the professor instead of attending to his business, as the following extract shows:—

"*Enter* PROFESSOR *and* YOUNG JOBBER.

"*Y. Job.* Dear Mr. Professor, I can never repay you. You have given me such an insight by this visit, I am quite another thing. I find I knew nothing of the game before, though I assure you I have been reckoned a first-rate player in the city a good while. Nay, for that matter, I make no bad figure at the 'Crown' [probably the Crown Coffee-house in Bedford Row, before referred to], and don't despair, by your assistance, but to make one at White's soon.

"*Prof.* You may depend on all in my power, sir.

"*Y. Job.* Yes,—I must own I am vastly ambitious of making one at White's. Do you think I ever shall, Mr. Professor?

* * * * *

"Here's my father now, to interrupt us. I'm terrified to death. He'll certainly say some shocking thing or other. 'Tis a strange thing a young fellow can't have a polite taste, but these old fathers will take an ill-natured pleasure in confounding it.

"*Enter* ALDERMAN.

"*Ald.* I have heard, sir, of the pains you have been taking to instruct my son in the noble mystery of

gaming; but as it is a science not quite so reputable for a citizen, * * I must beg you to desist your visits for the future.

"*Prof.* O, sir, there was no necessity for this abruptness. I shall certainly obey you. I don't want half a word. For know, sir, it is a favour that I attend your son.

"*Y. Job.* O yes, sir, a prodigious favour.

"*Ald.* Favour, blockhead!

"*Prof.* Yes, sir, a favour; for at this instant, half a dozen dukes, and as many earls, lords, and ladies are waiting for me. * * You are under very wrong notions concerning Whist. It is one of the noblest and most useful games in the universe, sir. All good citizens ought to study it. Partnership in Whist is an emblem of partnership in trade; it shows how much depends on good partnership; and I venture to say that a good Whist-player will make both a good partner and a good merchant.

"*Ald.* Your talking after this manner, sir, does not give me the better idea of the game. And, for aught I know, this treatise of yours may be a plot against our liberties, sir.

"*Prof.* Ha! ha! ha! a plot against our liberties!

"*Ald.* Yes, sir; everything that tends to the weakening our morals is a weakener of liberty, and so far may be said to be a plot against it. Thus, by your inculcating the doctrine of Whist in a scientifical manner, it will become constitutional in our youth; and by becoming constitutional, eradicate usefuller studies; and by eradicating usefuller studies, vitiate our morals; and by vitiating our morals, open a door to the destruction of our liberties, as I said before. And therefore,

sir, as you have managed it, I look upon Whist as a very vile game.

"*Prof.* A vile game, sir?

"*Ald.* Yes, sir; vile game.

* * * * *

"*Y. Job.* Pray, don't mind the old gentleman, Mr. Professor; he's *non compos.* Please to accept of these five pieces. * *

"*Prof.* Your most obedient, sir. [*Exit.*"

Even at the present day a very good player is often nicknamed by his club friends "The Professor." It is by no means impossible that the idea was started in the satire just quoted.

Hoyle is also spoken of in his professional capacity in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1755, in a letter from a fashionable physician, showing how he got into repute by making it a part of his art to learn the accomplishments of the day. He says, "Hoyle tutored me in several games at cards, and under the name of guarding me from being cheated, insensibly gave me a taste for sharping."

There can hardly be a doubt but that the "Short Treatise" was originally composed for the use of pupils, it being lent to them in manuscript, just as, nowadays, grinders lend notes to men they are coaching. In the table of contents it is stated that the treatise was disposed of in manuscript the previous winter. The immediate cause of its appearance in book form was probably to stop piracy, as the author makes the following address to the reader:—"The author of the following treatise has thought proper to give the publick notice that he has reduced the price

of it, that it may not be worth any person's while to purchase the pirated editions which have already been obtruded on the world; as likewise all those piratical editions are extremely incorrect; and that he will not undertake to explain any case but in such copies as have been set forth by himself, or that are authoriz'd as revis'd and corrected under his own hand." Then follows this advertisement:—"This work having been entered at Stationers' Hall according to Act of Parliament, whoever shall presume to print or vend a pirate [*sic*] edition shall be prosecuted according to law." And in later editions we find, "Whoever pirates either of these works will be sued. The proprietor has already obtained an injunction against nine persons for pirating or selling pirated editions of them."

Fresh editions were frequently called for, and matters remained much in this state until the year 1760, when the laws of the game were revised, and the revision (nearly all Hoyle) was agreed to by the members of White's and Saunders' chocolate-houses, then the headquarters of the card-playing world. How fashion changes! White's, the oldest club in London, stands where it did, but card-playing is now a very small feature there.

The laws, as adopted by White's and Saunders' chocolate-houses, are given by Hoyle in his later editions, and these laws, commonly called Hoyle's, remained the only recognised authority until the year 1864. After the lapse of a hundred and four years the two great play-clubs of London, the Turf and the Portland, revised the old code and added the traditional laws. The code of the Turf and Portland Clubs now governs the game.

In addition to Whist, Hoyle also wrote treatises on quadrille, piquet, chess, backgammon, and brag, and an "Essay towards making the doctrine of chances easy to those who understand vulgar arithmetick only," dedicated to the Earl of Egmont.

Hoyle died in Wellbank [Welbeck] Street, Cavendish Square, on Tuesday, August 29th, 1769, at the advanced age, it is said, of ninety-seven. The papers of the day notice his death, and state that he was well known in the polite world, and that he lived to see his treatise on Whist pass through no less than thirteen editions. This is inaccurate. It should be sixteen editions. The seventeenth edition announces Hoyle's death.

The subsequent history of Whist is so well known that it may be dismissed in a few words. Quadrille gradually went out; Whist as gradually came in; till at last it obtained undisputed possession of our card rooms. All that has happened since Hoyle wrote is, that the principles of the game have become more thoroughly developed and consequently the style of play has altered somewhat; and from being ten-up, the points have been reduced to five.

First, as regards the change from Long Whist to Short. According to the received version, Short Whist was at first a mere accident. It is said on the authority of Mr. Hoare, of Bath, who was one of the party, that about eighty years back Lord Peterborough lost one night a large stake at Whist, and his friends, in order to give him a chance of recouping himself, offered to cut the game in half. The new game was found to be so lively that these gentlemen had no difficulty in inducing their club associates to try it.

Hence it became general in the clubs, was carried all over the country, and the supremacy of Short Whist became an acknowledged fact. CLAY, in his "Treatise" (1864), says, "The old game is dead, and the modern in full vigour, in spite of at least one very glaring defect—the undue value of honours, which are pure luck as compared with that of the tricks, which greatly depend on skill. Short Whist bears marks of its hasty and accidental origin. If the change had been carefully considered the honours would have been cut in half as well as the points. Two by honours would have counted one point; four by honours would have counted two. Had this been so the game would be perfect."

The style of play has varied considerably since Hoyle's day, and we constantly hear of different schools of players; but we suspect that many of those who talk of this or that school attach a very dim idea to their words. The distinctions between the various styles of game that have prevailed during the last thirty years are excellently summed up by Clay. He observes, in substance, that Whist, as he remembered it thirty years before, was played by men whose early education had been at Long Whist. They were, on the whole, very accurate and careful players, but they were wanting in dash and brilliancy, and sinned, according to Clay, in playing what we now call a backward game. Clay only remembered one man, the celebrated Major Aubrey, of that school, who refused strict adherence to the over-careful system to which his companions were slaves.

Whist, however, that is, Short Whist, travelled, and the great Paris Whist-players were not content to

imitate our system. They struck out a path for themselves, and though the old school looked with horror on "the French game," the new school were found to be winning players.

It is not easy to define exactly the difference between the rival schools. The main point of difference is this: the old player would run no risks; his first care was to see the game saved; if he could make certain of saving it he would not speculate on winning it. The modern player would do almost the reverse. He was always on the look-out to win the game, and, failing in that, he would play to save it. In "My Novel" there is depicted, with the touch of a master, the state of mind of the players of the two schools. Short Whist had been introduced at Squire Hazeldean's. Captain Barnabas, who played at Graham's with honour and profit, and who there, no doubt, imbibed his new-fangled style of play, is partner with Parson Dale. The parson plays a capital rubber; he is one of the old school, careful to a degree. The captain happens at a doubtful point to lead a trump (we stop to say that, whatever our opinion may be worth, we should have done the same), and he loses the game. He is soundly rated by the parson for his trump lead.

We quite think with Clay, that the game of bold attack is to be preferred to that of cautious defence; and that, for example, with anything like a fair chance of winning the game, it is right to run some risk—how much is a question of judgment—and to seize the opportunity which may not occur again. At the same time, we feel that there is a dangerous tendency among players to attempt too forward a game, and we therefore strenuously insist on Clay's rule, to

which we beg respectfully to give our adherence: "I recommend a middle course, leaning, however, more nearly to the new than the old doctrine."

One mischief of forward play is that it tempts players to persist in playing a strong game, even after the attack has failed. The forward player must be always ready to change his tactics. He will probably have lost something by his early attack; but, if he plays with judgment, he will have taken a chance well worth the price he has paid for it.

We look forward to the formation of yet another school, which we may designate the "scientific school" of play. The fundamental principles of Whist are now more generally comprehended than formerly. The rising school has recognised the fact that Whist is a science: and that if a man would become a sound player he must be content to think over his game and to study it, as is the case with other sciences. The amount of book-work necessary for this purpose is not great; there are several thoughtful treatises on the game which include its main principles within a hundred and fifty pages. And to make a fair average player much practice is not required. To make a master of the science we must of course add to theoretical knowledge the power of accurate observation and of acute perception; and these can only be obtained by frequent encounters at the table.

To explain what we mean by "scientific" play we must take an example. Refinements creep in by degrees. Thus the rule with respect to returned leads was formerly unknown to the best players, and it is nowhere laid down by Hoyle. Broadly stated it is this: In returning your partner's lead if you have but

two of the suit remaining in your hand, return the best; if more than two, the worst. When this rule of play was first promulgated it could have had but a select band of adherents: nowadays it is considered the A B C of Whist. Again, the call for trumps, unknown to our grandfathers, is now universally adopted. Such are the improvements which science gradually introduces and adds to the game. A point is started, and eventually settled by the combined experience of good players, when it becomes a part of the established game. Kindred questions are as yet unsettled, but in course of time the answers will take their places. Thus a gradual improvement in the game may be expected. The Whist of our grandchildren will probably be no more like ours than ours is like that of Hoyle or Mathews. During the last few years the introduction of American leads has added new features to the game; has materially altered the play of the second hand; and has resulted in the invention of a system of unblocking for the third hand, to say nothing of smaller details. The foundation has been laid, on which the practice of the scientific school will eventually be built.

CHIT-CHAT ABOUT WHIST.

BY "CAVENDISH."

Author of "The Laws and Principles of Whist."

The interest and excitement aroused by games may depend entirely on chance, as at rouge et noir or blind hookey; or it may result almost entirely from the

exercise of skill, as at chess and billiards; or it may centre in a combination of the two, as at Whist and cricket.

There are, then, three classes of games, viz., games of chance, games of skill, and mixed games.

Games of chance, that is, games in which chance is almost the sole exciting element, have a most objectionable feature in this, that they are wanting in interest unless played for money. The amusement they afford is essentially connected with the sum depending on the result. They are, in fact, mere excuses for gambling. For this reason they are very properly tabooed in all respectable clubs. The time when, perhaps, they are least hurtful is when they are employed to keep a mixed party of adults and children amused. For then, without a round game, it is often difficult to make the evening pass off pleasantly. And, be it observed, it is just at such meetings that money is not played for. The stakes are probably bon-bons; the less fortunate of the youngsters have their stock of counters gratuitously replenished by the grown-up winners, and the effect is that all the small fry win, and go home with their pockets full of sugar-plums.

Games of skill, or rather games in which skill very much preponderates (for there is no such thing as a game of pure skill), are open to an objection opposite to that which attaches to games of chance. Games of skill are apt to excite too much interest.

To play well at them is too hard work. It is making a toil of a pleasure. We resort to games as a relief, when we have already experienced enough—perhaps more than enough—brain excitement. Under these circumstances we do not desire severe mental exertion,

but rather repose of mind. Repose is not promoted by engaging in a contest of pure skill. Hence the point of the remark by Dr. Pole, that to follow chess, as an amusement, is to jump out of the frying-pan into the fire. Chess, if well played, is certainly no relaxation; and in this sense it ought not to be regarded as a game at all. Indeed, it is not a game among first-rate performers; it is the business of their lives. Chess is their real work, ordinary engagements are their relief.

Since games of chance excite too little, and games of skill too much interest, we must look for the *juste milieu*, in mixed games, in games where skill and chance both freely enter. The entry of chance not only diminishes the labour, but it at the same time increases the interest of games, by varying the faculties of the mind which the play calls into operation. Thus, a hand at Whist presents us at its commencement with a problem of nearly pure chance; towards its close (among good players), with one of nearly pure skill; and intermediately with ever-varying gradations between the two. The composition of the ancient Indian game of chess was very similar to that of Whist. It was played by four persons with four suits or sets of men, variously coloured; and the moves were determined by casts with dice, thus rendering it a mixed game.

Recent investigations make this doubtful. Faulkener ("Games Ancient and Oriental, and How to Play Them," Longmans, 1892) thinks that only the first move was determined by chance. The game of Chaturanga is obsolete, and any statement as to how it was played must partake of the nature of a guess.

It is easy to show that Whist is free from the objections which appertain to unmixed games. On the one hand, it does not demand severe or unceasing application in order to excel in it; there is no need to devote a life to the acquisition of its openings. Nor, on the other hand, does it require the stimulus of gambling. It has been truly remarked that "the demon of gambling shrinks abashed before the good genius of Whist, and feels his spirit rebuked, as it is said Mark Anthony's was by Cæsar." The interest attaching to the game for its own sake is such that the domestic rubber for "love" or for "heads" is looked forward to during the long winter evenings as a fertile source of enjoyable recreation.

Our illustration represents such a rubber. The guests, all intimate friends, have assembled for what is called a "quiet" evening. In various parts of the room we behold groups of visitors engaged in the usual amenities of after-dinner existence, some dancing, some whispering soft nothings, some gay, some serious. We particularly envy the tall officer to the right, who is so fortunate as to be encircled by three of the prettiest girls in the room. Look at the quartette. The young lady who has tied on her head with a neck-ribbon, in accordance with the fashion prevalent at the time this drawing was made, has evidently made some smart repartee, which the other two girls are enjoying immensely, to the momentary discomfiture of young Heavy. In the foreground is another quartette, engaged at Whist. This hand decides the rubber; and an interesting hand it is, if we may judge from the rapt countenances of the onlookers. The count (whom we strongly suspect of

AN EXPERIENCED "PORTLANDER."

See p. 38.

having betted an extra half-crown on the rubber) has led a puzzler. The second hand, an experienced Portlander, who nevertheless condescends in private to indulge in "silver threepennies," is in doubt whether to trump or not. The previous play of the hand does not afford him any positive indication of the course he should pursue. The count is perfectly happy. He waits quietly with the tenace in trumps in his hand, and whether our club friend trumps or not, is sure to win the game. The lady, who plays a capital rubber, sees, from the satisfied air of her partner, that all is right, and she therefore points, rather knowingly, to the card on the table. As for old Slowcoach opposite, he has not the slightest idea that the game is in danger. He is not what is called a regular Whist-player. He only "took a hand" to make up the table. Whist is torture to him. He frowns and screws up his face, and will be glad when the rubber is over.

When a stake is played for at private parties, the points are invariably fixed so low that the idea of gain, which is the essential feature of gambling, never enters the minds of the combatants. It may be asked, Why, then, play for any stake at all? There is an answer which is obvious as soon as it is stated. The use of a stake is to define the interest felt in the game. The difference between playing for a stake or for none, is just that of taking a walk with or without an object. Be the object ever so trifling, it much increases, by a sort of mental catalysis, the interes afforded by the occupation.

Nevertheless, it is sometimes urged as an objection against Whist, that it is a card game. Cards, and

therefore Whist, in the minds of many excellent persons, are associated with all sorts of shady doings, late hours, gambling, swindling, and even suicide. This is an association of ideas, and nothing more. The wickedness charged on cards generally should properly be confined, as has been explained, to games, whether of cards or not, the exciting element of which is chance. It is not fair to visit the sins of dissolute nephews and cousins, nobody knows how many times removed, upon the virtuous head of the family. A recent champion of chess, comparing it to Whist, alleges that all the kith and kin of the latter, including of course its very distant relations Patience and Beat-the-knave-out-of-doors, are disreputable. He twits it with want of prestige, and contrasts its antecedents unfavourably with those of chess. As Will Wimble was wont to remark, "There is a great deal to be said on both sides." Whist certainly cannot boast the lineage of chess. But, among civilised beings, it is admitted that the simple accident of birth should be no bar to social distinction. On the contrary, the plebeian, who has worked his way up from the ranks, is all the more respected on that very account. It is the glory of Whist that it has broken through the ties of caste, and that it owes its present position, as the king of card games, entirely to its intrinsic merits, as will appear on tracing the biography of the game.

Whist is unquestionably of English origin, though as to the time and place of its birth we do not possess any precise evidence. Whist is not mentioned by Shakespeare, nor by any writer of the Elizabethan era, from which we may infer that the game was then

scarcely in existence. All we know about the extreme childhood of Whist is, that it was spent in the servants' hall. Its associates there, we are informed on the authority of Daines Barrington, were "put" and "all-fours." The game seems soon to have manifested seductive powers, for as early as 1621 Taylor, the Water-poet, mentions Whist as inducing the prodigal to "fling his money free with carelessness." We cannot deny that at this period the character and friends of Whist were decidedly low. Whist even appears in a lock-up in the questionable company of Mr. Jonathan Wild the Great. Feilding records that when the ingenious Count la Ruse was domiciled with Mr. Geoffrey Snap (who enjoyed office under the sheriffs of London and Middlesex), his countship sought to beguile the tedium of his in-door existence by recourse to the amusements of the day. Mr. Snap's two daughters benevolently aided him, and chose Wild to make up their parties. Whisk-and-swabbers (which is only Whist under an alias) was then (1682) greatly in vogue, and the ladies were consequently obliged to look out for a fourth person. In the "Memoirs of the Lives, Intrigues, and Comical Adventures of the most Famous Gamesters" from the time of Charles II. to that of Queen Anne, we come across a sharper named Johnson, whose last adventure was that he was hanged in 1690. Of him it is written that he excelled in the art of "securing" honours for himself and partner when playing at Whist. We next hear of Whist frequenting public-houses in the City. "The Compleat Gamester," published in 1674, tells us that Whist was a tavern game, and that sharpers generally took care to put about the bottle before business began. For all this,

Whist never accommodated itself easily to the designs of card legs. It never took to them kindly, but, like Oliver Twist, was the victim of circumstances and of its own inexperience. Whist was more sinned against than sinning. Accordingly it contrived, after a time, to escape from its tavern acquaintances; and early in the eighteenth century, though not as yet fashionable, it had, at least, become respectable. Its principal friends at this epoch were country squires and country parsons. In the *Beaux's Stratagem*, by Farquhar (1707), Squire Sullen is said to be fond of Whist, and Mrs. Sullen, who was a fine lady from London, refers to her husband's predilection in terms which imply that Whist was then classed with rural rather than with West-End accomplishments. Pope also, about this time (1715), alludes to Whist in conjunction with the squirearchy; and Swift, in his "Essay on the Fates of Clergymen" (1728), says that the clergy occasionally indulged in the society of Whist. This patronage does not seem to have been equal to the task of altogether retrieving Whist from the character of vulgarity.

Better days, however, were in store for it. About this time "The Compleat Gamester" became amalgamated with "The Court Gamester," and Whist was admitted into the first, the courtly division of the work, in company with "ombre, quadrille, quintille, picquet, and the royal game of chess." About 1730, a party of gentlemen, of whom the first Lord Folkestone was one, frequented the Crown Coffee-house in Bedford Row, and there introduced Whist, studied the game, and, it is believed, discovered some of its principles. At all events, they laid down the following rules: lead from

the strong suit, study your partner's hand, and attend to the score.

In 1742 Whist was adopted by EDMOND HOYLE, who is to this day called the father of the game. Under his auspices Whist made the acquaintance of all the rank and fashion of England, and travelled across the Channel during the Anglomania which prevailed in France in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The Baron de V—— says, "It was even represented at Versailles, but I cannot affirm whether it was by the English Ambassador in person." The remainder of the career of Whist is well known. It was welcomed to all the chocolate-houses, clubs, and fashionable assemblies. It became the lion of the day. It was talked about and written about. Once really known, it was esteemed a universal favourite, admired and respected by all; and in spite of a little *contretemps* with the premier baron of England, some sixty years back, it has retained its ascendency until now.

Edmond Hoyle published his "Short Treatise on the Game of Whist" in 1743. The only known copy of the genuine first edition is in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The book appeared just in the nick of time, when card-playing was the rage, and when Whist was rapidly rising into repute. It ran through many editions, and was a lucky hit for both author and publisher. Hoyle, in his most sanguine mood, could scarcely have imagined the success which awaited his modest but invaluable work. He could hardly have expected to be ranked among English classics, and to become indispensable to every well-furnished library. He could never have hoped to be sung by the poets, nor for Whist and

Hoyle to be coupled with Troy and Homer: yet no less a bard than Byron has declared that—

> "Troy owes to Homer what Whist owes to Hoyle."

Hoyle was an authority, or rather *the* authority, from the moment of his appearance; and his laws remained the authority until the year 1864. That year gave birth to a new club code; which, however, scarcely alters any of Hoyle's laws, but adds the traditional laws that have accumulated since his day.

Hoyle did much more than give a printed existence to the laws of Whist. He applied mathematics to games, and especially to the game of Whist, and so raised it to the dignity of a scientific game.

> "By his enlightened efforts Whist became
> A sober, serious, scientific game;
> To his unwearied pains, while here below,
> The great, th' important privilege we owe,
> That random strokes disgrace our play no more,
> But skill presides where all was chance before."

Hoyle's forte was in calculating what may be called the rules of chance (for be it known to the non-mathematical reader chance has rules), and in pointing those calculations to various games.

The furore caused by Hoyle's treatise was of no small amount, as may be gathered from the frequent allusions made to it by contemporary authors, and from the numerous publications, serious, facetious, friendly, and adverse, which it evoked. Almost immediately after its publication it drew forth a clever skit, called "The Polite Gamester; or the Humours of Whist, a Dramatic Satire, as acted every day at White's, and other Coffee-houses and Assemblies." This pamphlet is

now scarce. It introduces us to Hoyle under the designation of Professor Whiston, and to a number of card-players, more or less reputable. The clever players, who are represented as sharpers, and men who live by their wits, profess to be very much disgusted at the appearance of the treatise.

On the other hand, the gentlemen are in raptures. The drollest character in the satire is a Sir Calculation Puzzle, a passionate admirer of Whist, who gets Hoyle's odds off by heart, imagines himself a good player, yet always loses; another character, Lord Slim, is supposed to be a pupil of the professor's. Hoyle used to give lessons in Whist at a guinea a lesson. Sir Calculation and Lord Slim discuss the merits of the book, as follows:—

"*Lord Slim.* How do you like the last edition of his treatise, with the appendix,* Sir Calculation? I mean that signed with his name?†

"*Sir Calculation.* O, Gad! my lord, there never was so excellent a book printed; I'm quite in raptures with it; I will eat with it, sleep with it, go to court with it, go to parliament with it. I pronounce it the gospel of Whist-players; and the laws of the game ought to be wrote in golden letters, and hung up in coffee-houses, as much as the ten commandments in parish churches.

"*Sir John Medium.* Ha! ha! ha! You speak of the book with the zeal of a primitive father.

* "The author of this treatise did promise, if it met with approbation, to make an addition to it by way of appendix, which he has done accordingly."—*Hoyle.*

† "No copies of this book are genuine but what are signed by Edmond Hoyle."—*Advertisement to "Hoyle's Short Treatise on Whist."*

"*Sir Calculation.* Not half enough, Sir John; the calculations* are so exact . . . his observations† are so masterly, his rules‡ so comprehensive, his cautions§ so judicious. There are such a variety of cases‖ in his treatise, and the principles are so new, I want words to express my admiration of the author.

* * * * *

"*Lord Slim.* I have joined twelve companies in the Mall, and eleven of them were talking of it. It's the subject of all conversations, and has had the honour to be introduced into the cabinet. Why, thou'lt be laughed at intolerably unless you can tell how many hundred and odd it is for or against one that your partner has or has not such a card or such a card.

"*Sir Calculation.* Right, my lord; a man would now make as odd a figure without understanding Whist, as he would in not knowing how to make a bow."

A few years later another Hoyle-begotten pamphlet made its appearance. It was a moral paper, dissuading from play. It is only interesting on account of its title, which is ingeniously framed so as to obtain admission for the pamphlet into card circles. It was entitled, "Calculations, Cautions, and Observations relating to various Games played with Cards. By

* "Calculations for those who will bet the odds on any points of the score," &c. "Calculations directing with moral certainty how to play well any hand or game," &c.—*Hoyle.*

† "Games to be played with certain observations," &c.—*Hoyle.*

‡ "Some general rules to be observed," &c. "Some particular rules to be observed."—*Hoyle.*

§ "A caution not to part with the command of your adversaries' great suit," &c.—*Hoyle.*

‖ "With a variety of cases added in the Appendix."—*Hoyle.*

Edmond Hoyle, Jun." The writer, under this pseudonym (which was, of course, adopted to catch the eye), professed to be Hoyle's nephew. About the same time was published "An Address to Persons of Fashion, relating to Balls, Play-houses, Card-tables, &c.," which alludes to Hoyle, and contains the following critique on Whist-playing:—

"We read in history of a Roman emperor who spent his time in the catching of flies. Surely our modern nobility and gentry may justly claim the privilege of diverting themselves a few hours in an evening in counting black and red spots, and asking, 'What's trumps?' 'Who shuffled?' and 'Who dealt?'"

"Bob Short" was published in 1793, and became almost as famous as Hoyle. Bob Short's fame is built on that of Hoyle. "Bob Short" only professed to be "Hoyle Abridged." It is said that seven thousand copies were sold in twelve months. [See page 212 for these Rules.]

Hoyle has been several times translated. In 1776 a translation was published at Vienna; and, in 1786, Hoyle was admitted into the "Académie Universelle des Jeux," published at Amsterdam.

About sixty years after the first appearance of Hoyle, Mathews published his "Advice to the Young Whist-player, containing most of the Maxims of the Old School, with the Author's Observations on those he thinks erroneous." We have ascertained that the first edition was anonymous, "by an Amateur, 1804." His advice was listened to through a number of editions. Indeed, Mathews may be regarded as the next writer of any pretension after Hoyle. Mathews's "Rules and Maxims" are terse, pithy, and epigram-

matic, commanding attention, and fixing themselves strongly on the memory.

Again, after a lapse of about sixty years, an advance was made, as witness the treatises of "Cavendish," Clay, and Pole. With regard to the former, it does not become the writer to offer any critical remarks. The following quotation from the preface to the first edition (1862) sufficiently explains the *raison d'être* of the "Principles of Whist":—

"It has often occurred to the author that there are two principal defects in the existing treatises on the game of Whist—the one that the principles of play are, in general, laid down as so many isolated and arbitrary conventions, the reasons upon which such principles are based being seldom, if at all, and scarcely ever fully, stated; the other, that suitable illustrations, by which alone the principles can be brought forcibly home and fixed in the memory, are almost entirely wanting. The present work is an attempt to supply these deficiencies. With regard to the latter, the author feels that nothing, in point of illustration of principles, can be so instructive as a selection of hands played completely through, and accompanied by copious explanations. The idea, it is believed, as applied to Whist, is a new one, though a similar plan has long been in use in treatises on Chess."

In 1864 appeared "Short Whist," by James Clay, the acknowledged authority on the game in his day.

This is an admirable work, and is full of suggestion for those who choose to read between the lines. Unfortunately, however, it is not up-to-date. It is well known that Clay intended, in a second edition, to recast a portion of his treatise. Illness, terminating

JAMES CLAY (J.C.).

See p. 48.

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fatally, prevented the execution of this scheme; and the author's sons, with whom the copyright rested, decided, with filial devotion, not to make any alteration in their father's work, notwithstanding that they were aware of the intention above expressed. In their preface to the new and improved edition (1881) they say:—

"Since the first publication of Mr. Clay's book, certain alterations have been made in the game of Whist which have already secured the favour of many of the best Whist-players, and only require to be generally understood in order to be universally adopted.

* * * * * *

"These improvements in the game, as they must, without doubt be regarded, were made, as we have said, subsequently to the publication of Mr. Clay's book; but, whilst they were still in their infancy, Mr. Clay put them to the test of his individual experience, acknowledged their value, and did not hesitate to give his adhesion to them.

* * * * *

"We wish it to be understood that, whilst we now place on record such modification in Mr. Clay's views as came within our own personal knowledge, we have jealously guarded ourselves from making any alteration in the book itself, which we present to the reader as it was originally written."

Dr. Pole is so well known as an authority on the theoretical side of Whist-play, that it is hardly necessary for us to enter into any detail respecting his contributions to its literature. His "Theory of Whist" (Longmans, 1864), and his "Philosophy of Whist" (De la Rue & Co, 1883), are of special value to the

beginner. They ground him in general principles, leaving him to study more recondite works for the application of principles to particular cases.

We may add that "Whist Developments" and "Whist Perception" by "Cavendish," are the latest works on the subject. The former enters minutely into the vexed question of American leads, a feature of comparatively recent introduction, well worthy the attention of advanced Whist-players. The latter seeks to impress on the reader that after, say, the first five or six tricks, he must trust to his observation and judgment rather than to book-rules, which presuppose the beginning of a hand at the score of love all.

We have now traced the progress of Whist from its obscure origin to its present brilliant position. Whether the game is susceptible of yet higher elaboration, or whether its science has by this time reached the zenith, time alone can show. There can, however, be no doubt of this, that, during the last hundred and fifty years, Whist has progressed to a pitch of high and refined development. Though chance enters into it largely, the combinations which arise afford such numerous openings for the employment of skill, that the interest of a hand rarely flags, and the mental powers are kept moderately and pleasantly occupied. The cessation of the play between the hands, like the "pause" between the beats of the heart, affords just the necessary quantum of refreshment, and so obviates the ill-effects of long-sustained effort. Hence, at Whist, the amusement, interest, and relaxation of those engaged are, one and all, together promoted to the utmost. The game has the good fortune of combining the means of innocent recreation, of healthy excitement, and of appropriate

mental exercise; and, owing to its simplicity of construction, its never-ending variety, and its well-balanced proportions of skill and chance, it fulfils the social requirements of a game better than any other. Of Whist, it may be said that, like the Turk, it "bears no brother near its throne."

ON WHIST AS A BUSINESS.

BY A. C. EWALD.

In a proverb, which is one of the household words of the English people, we are told that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. In these days of cram and competition we all of us may do well to bear in mind the truths contained in this saying. To rise in our profession, to keep ourselves before the public, to obtain the ordinary means of sustenance, all make us so incessant in our efforts and so dangerously industrious that often, even if we are fortunate enough to grasp the laurel-leaf of victory, we have to exchange it for the cypress of the funereal garland. We are so eager, so anxious, so terribly in earnest, in our struggles for self-advancement, that we allow ourselves no time for relaxation and repose. We are in business; we know the competitors who are pitted against us, and who are ever ready to profit by our negligence and over-caution, consequently we worry our nervous system to give competition no chance; we begin our labours early and end them late; we essay to checkmate our rivals at every turn; we plot our commercial

combinations with the most consummate skill, so as not to leave a single point in our operations for the enemy to obtain the advantage; and then jubilant and triumphant, we lay our heads upon our bursting money-bags, only for a shattered constitution, that has for years been kept at high-pressure, and has been sternly denied its necessary rest and pleasures, to own itself vanquished, and to force us suddenly to quit the scenes of our struggles. We are at the bar; we have had to wait years for our practice, and have no intention, now that the tide has turned, of not being borne upon its waters to fortune; we work as a slave at the galleys—in court all day, in the House of Commons all night, and in the gray of the early morning we are seen studying our briefs; then, when dyspepsia has claimed us for its own, and our liver is as swollen as our brief-bag, we stretch forth our hand and take hold of the prizes that are set before us—how long to enjoy them? how soon to relinquish them? We live in the days when the survival of the fittest is our creed, when success or extinction is our motto, and how often have we to fall martyrs to our faith! Human nature, like the seashore, or even the appetite of an alderman, has its limits, and in endeavouring to go beyond we are bound to be made suffer for our short-sighted temerity. If we work we must have recreation; if we waste our tissues by intellectual or physical labour we must restore the deficiency by pleasure or repose, for all work and no play, not only makes the typical Jack a dull, but soon a defunct, boy. Labour and leisure are the laws of our moral being, and they are not to be infringed with impunity.

But how are we to obtain repose or relaxation?

Repose is not rest when it degenerates into *ennui;* and relaxation, which is obtained by disagreeable efforts, is not pleasure. We may not have the requisite means to provide the most exhilarating of all pleasures: the cheerful canter, the brisk bracing trot, the excitement of a day with the hounds, may be to us unknown joys, and as much beyond our reach as dry sherry and a winter at Mentone are to the parish pauper. Gout, rheumatism, and confounded old age may compel us to eschew cricket and lawn-tennis, archery and rinking. What are we to do? Even if authors were always amusing or instructive, we cannot ever be trying our eyes with reading. Music, we know, has charms to soothe the savage breast; but good music is not always to be had, and even when we are fortunate enough to be able to listen to it, how often, after a hard day's work, does it result in wrapping its tired audience in irreverent slumber? We want relaxation without the severity of fatigue, interest without a baneful excitement, and amusement without depression. Where can you get it? I answer, At the Whist-table.

Is there a happier period in the whole day than when, after a comfortable dinner with digestion agreeably waiting upon appetite, cigar in mouth, we betake ourselves to the fascinating board of green cloth; the well-shaded candles shedding a soft subdued light upon the table; the clean cards longing to be set free from their virgin cases; the red and white counters standing apart in separate groups, like the armies in the Wars of the Roses awaiting the conflict; the hush of the room, the imagination busy with the anticipated victories of science over luck? There are many excellent people who, because gambling is associated with

cards, strictly taboo "the devil's picture-books," and will not permit them to take any part in the pleasures of their household. No one who has seen the terrible miseries that follow in the wake of the gambler's career can say that this objection is wholly undeserved. It is not for me to preach. Like most men, I have known what it is to watch with eager eyes the fall of the cards at *trente et quarante*, to hope for the lucky eight or nine at baccarat, and to put in an appearance at the fascinating round games of loo, Napoleon, brag, poker, and Newmarket. But with age comes experience; and when invited by the voice of the charmer to depart from the legitimate paths of card-playing, a stern and Spartan-like negative is my only answer. What! never? Well, hardly ever!

But Whist is not gambling; it is a game which calls forth some of the best faculties of the brain, and causes chance to succumb before science. A Whist-player of the first-class requires to possess keen powers of observation, a clear and tenacious memory, the gift of quickly drawing inferences, a knowledge of varied combinations, and a shrewdness always on the watch for opportunity. It is much to be regretted that at most of the clubs so fine a game should be placed out of the reach of many men on account of the high points that are played. Whist is a study so pleasurable in itself that it can entirely dispense with the pernicious excitement of the gambler; to play for points which may involve a heavy pecuniary loss is utterly destructive of the beauty of the game; instead of a pleasant intellectual excitement, it then degenerates into anxiety, and is the fruitful parent of ill-temper, worry, and a feverish state of things utterly at

variance with the spirit of the game. Men of fortune will always be prone to gamble; yet there is nothing to prevent them from playing moderately low points, and betting amongst each other as high as they please. Were they to adopt this plan many a man, who keenly loves the noble game, but who is deterred from cutting in from the heavy losses he may be led to sustain, would often find his way into the card-room, to the enjoyment of himself and to the detriment of nobody. Half-crown points are quite sufficient to create excitement, and would not require on the part of the social Lazarus a large balance to lie idle at his banker's to meet a run of bad luck. But when it comes to crowns and pounds or ten-shilling points, and a fiver on the rub, or pounds and fives, a few nights of misfortune signify the loss of a small income. Whist should be played for the love of the game, and not for the money it may be the means of obtaining.

It has been said that everyone thinks he can drive, and most persons think they can play Whist. It seems to the uninitiated so simple for four people to sit down at a table and each to play thirteen cards. These guileless folk may be ignorant of the leads, they may have never studied the pages of "Cavendish," they afford no information to their partner; yet they seldom, in private life, scruple to cut in and spoil a table. They look upon Whist as they look upon a round game—not a thing to be studied seriously, because with good cards one wins, and with bad cards one loses. To read up the subject attentively seems beneath them; Whist with them is a game, not a science. How often do we hear men saying, "I am very fond of taking a hand at Whist, but I can't be

bothered about the rules, and all that!" Why cannot they be bothered? What would they think of a man who said he was very fond of hunting, but who couldn't be bothered about learning to ride; or of a man who boated, but couldn't be bothered about learning to row; or who played cricket, racquets, lawn-tennis, but couldn't be bothered to learn the game? Why do they play Whist week after week, yet systematically refuse to study the subject? To be a first-class Whist-player is a gift, and few there be who possess it; but anyone not a born fool can by a few weeks' study so far instruct himself in the game as to acquire the recognised rules—to know what cards to lead, what to play second hand, what to return to his partner, and how to deal with trumps. Whist has its laws like mathematics or political economy, and a man has no more chance of playing a rubber correctly without reading them up than he has of writing an article on the currency without knowing something of political economy, or of working out a problem without being acquainted with geometry.

If you lead the king, your partner knows that you have either ace or queen; if second hand you put on an unnecessarily high card, and afterwards, when the same suit is played, let fall a low card, your partner knows that you are calling for trumps; if you lead trumps early in the game, your partner knows that you have five, or that you wish trumps out in order to bring in certain strong suits in your hand; if you take the trick with the king, your partner knows that you have not the queen; if you trump a suit first round when second hand, your partner knows that you are weak in trumps; if you force your partner to ruff a

suit, he concludes that you are strong in trumps. Thus the game calls forth all our powers of observation and calculation, and should be played in silence and without any interrupting agents around.

There is no game which reveals to us more the character of a man than Whist. There is the man of cunning and deep design, who will always be in favour of over finessing, of tricky combinations which seldom come off, and whose play, if it misleads his opponents, is also successful in deceiving his partner. There is the timid fearful man, who plays an essentially nervous game; who never leads trumps unless he has amazing strength; who plays entirely for his own hand; who is given to putting on his best cards second hand for fear he should lose the opportunity of ever making them; who, if he has a bad hand, is always ready to throw down his cards, and who never dreams of being of service to his partner. There is the superstitious man, who is a fervent believer in luck; who is always changing his chair and calling for new cards when fortune is adverse; who objects to being looked over; who has faith in playing on certain days or in certain coats, or in the efficacy of some fetish—a pocket-book, a pencil, an old coin—which he places upon the table to court the fickle goddess. There is the emotional man, the joy or gravity of whose face at once reveals that he holds good or bad cards; who is intoxicated with delight when he wins, and as gloomy as a mourner when he loses. There is the incessant grumbler, who before he even looks at his hand growls about "his luck"; who wails like a Jeremiah about the rubbers he loses; who is always commenting upon the good fortune of others; who sighs and groans when his partner

leads, as if a tooth were being drawn out of his head instead of a card out of his hand; who appeals to those around for sympathy when cruelly treated; and who, even when victorious, insults his luck by ironically remarking, "Actually I have won a rubber!"

Indeed, to comment upon the moral qualities of the individual as exemplified by Whist would be endless. The game is a great test of breeding. Your true gentleman knows how to win without exultation, and to lose without temper. To take up bad hand after bad hand, never to find your partner with a suit, or to be the victim of a nasty run of ill-luck, is certainly not calculated to develop the amiable qualities of our erring nature. Yet the well-bred player shows by no external signs the angry feelings within him: calm and quiet in all his *dealings*, he awaits the turn of the tide with the patience of the philosopher and the well-balanced temper of one who has learnt the value of self-control. With the vulgar it is very different: he is boisterous in his objurgations against fortune; he abuses his partner; he angrily bangs his cards upon the table; he is hot, noisy, and restless, and pays his money ungraciously. It is the contrast between a silent majestic river and a shallow babbling brook.

I have said that Whist is one of the most fascinating of amusements, but it is not given to every one to take it up. No man whose temper is ungovernable, who is unable to bear defeat, who hates losing his money, or who is intolerant of a partner's mistakes, should become a Whist-player. Such a person not only renders himself ridiculous, but creates feuds at the table, and mars the pleasure and sociability of the game. No one should play unless he can afford to lose without

causing himself anxiety. Nothing is more distressing than to win from one whom we know can ill spare what we deprive him of; both the victor and the vanquished are made uncomfortable. No one should sit down to play who is rendered heavy from the little side-dishes he loves, not wisely but too well, or whose brain is clouded by indulgence in the choicer vintages. Ah, but if Whist were only to be played by those who are proficient in the game, whose tempers are never ruffled, whose memory is clear and limpid, whose balance permits them to stand a bad run of ill-luck, and who never complain of the tactics of their partner, how perfectly charming would every rubber become! In another and a better world we may perhaps play such Whist; but not, I fear, so long as our imperfect human nature takes up its abode in this "best of all possible" planets.

One word as to luck. Whether we believe in it or not, there *is* such a thing as luck. We see one man for a season persistently holding bad cards, losing rubber after rubber, and invariably being found by his partner with nothing in his hand. Nor is such misfortune due to bad play. As long as honours count for what they do in the rubber, a first-class player, it is calculated, has only the advantage of one point in the game over an indifferent player. Still, in spite of men grumbling about their luck, and assuring everybody that they invariably lose, take a cycle of three years, and it will be found that luck is very even in its operations. I have seen men who have lost steadily throughout a whole year, yet in the next year they have more than recovered their losses. I have seen a man lose thirteen rubbers running; yet shortly afterwards I saw him

win every night during a whole week. No man who has made legitimate Whist the occupation of his life has ever come to much grief. The men who have been "broke" are those who play for points they cannot afford, and who have not the funds to stand a heavy run of bad luck; or those who, not content with the points, bet largely, backing their luck when they win, and plunging deeper and deeper to regain their losses when unfortunate. But legitimate Whist—that is, Whist at points that a man can afford to lose, and no bets—is the cheapest pleasure that can be indulged in. It offers one an agreeable rest after the day's labour, a healthy form of excitement, and intellectual exercise without fatigue. My advice to all is that of Talleyrand's, "Play Whist, and you will be spared a sorrowful old age."

HINTS TO YOUNG WHIST-PLAYERS.

We take it for granted that the reader is familiar with the proper leads, and the inferences from leads, and hope to give him such hints for the scheme of his game as most Whist-players have to puzzle out for themselves.

After the cards are dealt, and before you look at your hand, fix on your memory:—The score, the turn-up card, and whose lead it is.

Then sort your hand,—and do not fail to count your cards, for the penalty of playing with twelve, when the other players have thirteen each, is very heavy. You will then examine your trumps. If you are the leader, mark whether you hold a tenace, or what may

become a tenace, over the turn-up, and distinguish between the following degrees of strength in trumps. You may have *Great Strength*, which means, not less than five trumps one honour, or four trumps two honours; or *Strength*, four to an honour; or *Numerical Strength*, four or more trumps without an honour; or you may be *Guarded in Trumps*, that is, with king or queen third. You are *Weak in Trumps* if you have only knave third or king second, and if you have three or less, without an honour, you are *Very Weak*. The ace of trump, though it redeems any hand from absolute weakness, yet without three small ones does not constitute strength in trump.

Your strong suit is of the next importance. No suit is considered strong—in the sense in which we now use the word, no matter how high the cards in it—if it does not contain at least four cards. You will mark how many rounds it will take to establish it. You may have two strong suits, and if so, you must compare them carefully, prepared to attack whichever shows most chance of being soonest cleared; but in all probability your other two suits will answer one or other of the following descriptions. *Guarded Suits*:—King or queen third. *Doubtful Guards*:—Knave third, or king second. *Weak Suits*:—Three small cards, or fewer, without an honour. Queen or knave second, is weakness.

Keeping in mind the score, you have now to form a plan of play—to determine whether you ought to play a forward or a backward game—whether you shall play to win or to save the game. If, crediting your partner with only moderate strength, you may expect to win in the hand, you may play boldly, otherwise it

is wiser to play defensively. Save the game for that hand, and hope for better cards next deal. Either scheme of play must be considered as provisional. You must be prepared to change attack for defence, on any indication of strength from your adversary or weakness in your partner. Do not be tempted, however, from signs of weakness in your opponents, to abandon a defensive game until you are assured of your partner's strength.

All these things the good player gets into a habit of considering before he plays his first card; from that time till the end of the game, his attention is given only to the table. By this he saves himself from the humiliation of asking to see the last trick, or to have the cards placed, or inquiring what are trumps.

If the original lead should be with you, and you have made up your mind to play a strong game, you will play trump with any of the following hands:—

Great strength in trumps.

Strength in trumps, and your strong suit headed by winning cards.

Strength in trumps, and guarded in all suits.

Weak in trumps—if strong in all other suits.

If you are only strong in trumps, and your long suit is not cleared, and your other suits weak, it is better to lead from your long suit, and get it cleared before leading trumps. By the time you come into lead again, you will know your dangers and your resources, and can act with certainty in the best way.

Never lead from a guarded suit. If you have a clear intimation from your partner that he has strength in such a suit, lead him your highest card in it; even though it should be king or queen.

Remember that the conduct of the hand should be with that partner who is the strongest. If your strength is such that, supposing your partner to be equally strong, you must win, then take the command for that hand, and do not timidly abandon your own schemes for any intimation from your partner.

If you are weak, play defensively until you have reason to think your partner is strong; then play wholly for his hand. Never pause to clear your own suits. It is of great importance that the suits first cleared should be in the strong hand.

When you have found out that you and your partner have both moderate hands, lead to his suits, and he will lead to yours. By this mode of play you will make the most of your combined strength. In such a case you must finesse deeply, but with judgment. The young player rarely knows the full advantage of being led to in his strong suit. We will give him a striking example. You have got king, knave, nine and seven, and your right-hand adversary ace, queen, ten and eight of one suit, and your partner is similarly situated with regard to his right-hand opponent, in another suit. If you lead to him and he leads to you, you make six tricks by deep finessing. If you lead your own suits, you can make but two.

When you have not the original lead, you will keep a watch on your weak suit, to see where the strength lies in it. It will probably be early led, and the first round will go far to inform you whether your partner is strong, guarded, or weak in it.

If you find him weak, as well as yourself, it will be highly dangerous to lead trumps with less than five.

If your partner's original lead is to your strong suit,

avoid returning it till the trumps have been partly exhausted, but do not lead trumps without great strength, for the other suits are probably greatly against you. Your adversaries will trump out, and then the force from your strong suit will come when it can be most effectual.

When your right-hand adversary leads through your strong suit you are in a fine position to finesse against him. When he leads it the second time, or still more, when it is returned to him, you should know, almost to a certainty, what cards he holds in the suit.

When you lead to your partner, late in the hand, there are three indications to guide you as to his strong suit. The most definite is his original lead; but there are times when it would be bad play to return this—if the second player has put on an honour, or if you have won with a queen or a smaller card, having no higher in your hand. In the latter case if you return the suit, you are probably sacrificing your partner's king to the ace, or if your partner has the ace you are making the king good against him. If you have won with the knave, you are probably leading up to ace, queen, and if with a ten you are certainly leading up to ace, queen, or king, knave.

If you are thus prevented from returning your partner's lead, you cannot do better than lead up to weakness on your right. If, as last player on the first round of a suit, you win without an honour, or are unable to beat a low card, you will know that either ace, queen, or king, knave, are in your partner's hand, over the other two honours on his right, and that must be the best suit to lead.

Of course you will never lead to your partner's discard, unless you have overwhelming strength in the suit, or suspect that he has been forced to discard from his strong suit, to keep a guard in the other.

When you cannot return your partner's lead of trump, play out all your winning cards. He wants to know how many tricks you can make, and does not require your assistance in establishing his long suit, for that is probably done before he leads trumps. Besides, it is of importance that you should not interfere with his getting the lead so as to continue the trumps.

Do not persevere in useless attempts to clear your long suits, if headed by king or king, knave, when you find your partner cannot assist you.

In special sections we treat at some length two important points—*Forcing* and *Discard.*

There is another hint to the young player—one of first-rate importance. Remember your honours and score your game immediately after the last trick, before the cards are mixed, and before the congratulations, recriminations, and the rest of the rows commence; and, we beseech thee, refrain from adding to the din, and that you will play in peace and quietude.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

HOLD UP YOUR CARDS—SORTING—DEALING.

The theory of the modern game consists in playing with such simplicity and precision as will make the game as much like double dummy as possible. By playing in a certain recognised manner, and drawing all the inferences possible from the cards played, the system has become nearly perfect; but, inasmuch as knowledge is required at different periods during the progress of the play, it necessarily follows that much of the information comes too late ever to make the best Whist-play equal to double dummy. We suppose it is because of this theory that some men do not hesitate to take furtive glances at their adversary's hand, in order to make the position of the cards clear to their mind at an earlier period. To look over another's hand, and to play accordingly, is bold but dangerous. This is no modern idea. In the "Compleat Gamester," for the use of the young Princesses, by Richard Seymour, Esq., the fifth edition of which was published in 1734, we read as follows:—

"He that can by craft overlook his adversary's games hath a great advantage; or, if he can have some pretty glimpse of his partner's hand.

"There is a way by making some sign (the sign to discover to their partners which honours they have), or by the wink of one eye it signifies one honour; shutting both eyes, two; placing three fingers, or four, on the table, three or four honours.

"For which reason all nice gamesters play behind curtains."

The same idea crops up in one generation after another.

That which is often commented upon under the head of "Cheating at Whist," is but a repetition of what Richard Seymour, Esq., recommended to the young princesses.

We have heard much of the education of the Queen's children, and we may assume that it did not include lessons in cheating. If we are not better than our forefathers in all things, we trust we have advanced in this. Most men are aware how far another may finesse with advantage, and it follows that one goes much deeper into this branch than the recognised system allows, and the finesse comes off with effect. An accurate observer, whether playing or not, will look for other causes than great skill, and will make deductions not complimentary to the player. How far a man may go in this direction without being an absolute cheat, we are not prepared to say. Primarily, it is wrong to see your adversary's hand; secondly, it is wrong to play on the knowledge thus obtained. But men are so habitually careless in holding their cards that others, with quick sight, are placed in this predicament every day, and we think that this carelessness is not simply venial, but closely allied to criminality.

Supposing, as we have admitted, that it is wrong to see a card in the adversary's hand, who is the cause thereof? The man who holds his cards in such a position as will enable the other to see? or the man who sees? The first thing to teach a player is, the

obvious duty to hold up his cards. If the hand is held up without a slant, *i.e.*, perpendicular, or if with a slant, with the top of the cards slightly inclined to the holder, the opponents can never see a card. If this is an uncomfortable position for the wrist then the player can hold the cards fan-shape sideways, and he has only to take care the opposite side of the fan at the top is perpendicular with the bottom. Few sit correctly at the table. It is square, and therefore they take no precautions. They sit sideways instead of square. Sarah Battle's was the perfect seat—pardon the expression!—because it is not on record that Sarah* played Whist on horseback, but, "she sate bolt upright, and neither showed you her cards nor desired to see yours." Very few men sit bolt upright. It is an uncomfortable position and anything approaching discomfort we abhor; and although the doctors may incontestably prove that to stoop is injurious to the lungs, and that it is likely to bring on all kinds of horrible complaints, we do not suppose they will succeed in making players do otherwise than stoop.

But if men realise the fact that they will lose their money by not holding up their cards; that by their carelessness they do an injury to their partners; that they give their adversaries an advantage at the joint expense of the partnership, and that they are the cause of the cheating that may take place thereby, then they may be induced to become a trifle more particular. The course gentlemen usually pursue with players of this idiosyncrasy is to tell them to hold up their cards, and to tell them again.

When this has been done twice then threaten them.

* Charles Lamb's famous Whist heroine.

"If you persist in so holding your cards we shall play with the advantage we can thereby gain." Players of this description cannot be aware of the disagreeable feeling that passes through a man's mind when he sees another's cards. Little troubles are the curse of life. Men can suffer great losses without a pang, and bear them as men should, but the little pains, the little troubles particularly at games, destroy the whole pleasure of the evening.

The enjoyment of Whist is great. It must be admitted, the annoyances thereof counterbalance the pleasure, if men play regardless of the etiquette of the game.

To play with a fine player who is a sharper, does not give so much pleasure as playing with a muff—providing the muff observes the custom of the table and the usages of society, and yet at Whist all players prefer to play with their superiors. At no other game will men pit themselves against others of superior skill without odds, and yet whoever hears of odds at Whist? It must not be supposed that we intend in any way to justify a man in looking over another's hand on purpose; or, having accidentally seen an adversary's card, in playing accordingly. In spite of repeated provocations in the last instance, the man thus playing is a contemptible being at best. Contemptible, not simply as a sharper, but doubly contemptible as a sharper certain to be suspected even if he is not detected. Suspicion as regards discomfort (putting aside the consciousness of having done no wrong) is so exceedingly disagreeable that all men should do their best to avoid the chance of suspicion. This is best done, as we have said, by holding up the cards, by calling the player's

attention to the fact, whether he be partner or adversary, and if it should fall to your lot to see another's cards, never fail to say so. The large majority of mankind never entertain the thought of unfairness in play. There is something so mean and petty in robbing a friend that the mind revolts at such an enormity; but the demon suspicion once aroused is never asleep, and anyone accustomed to good play at Whist knows so well what card ought to be played that, nine times out of ten, the course is marked out with mathematical precision. A young man will be astonished at a queer finesse, but the more advanced player will look for the reason thereof, and on what supposition it was founded. When we were very young we played with a man who was thought a great genius at the game. Nay, we had that happy thought for a couple of years, until we saw his eye fixed on his adversary's hand, which explained the mystery. This, however, one would have thought could only occur with very young people, and we think still that no man could play on this system with good players without detection. On another occasion we played with a stranger at the club, and our original lead was the two of hearts from five, headed by the ten. Our partner won with the seven, and returned another suit. When the heart suit was led again, the original second player played the knave, which was taken by our partner's queen; and the third round the second player's king was taken by our partner's ace. No remark was made, but the left-hand adversary looked —oh, such a look! We did not approve the finesse at all; and we carefully avoided playing with that fine finesse. We suspected him unjustly. We believe this curious result arose from the player's nervousness, but

we shall never forget the expression of astonishment on our adversary's face, and he will never believe until the day of doom that the finesse was not in consequence of our partner's quickness of vision.

Closely allied to this subject is the manner in which players sort their cards.

Some men can play without sorting, and, assuming they can do so without being a drag on the game, they possess a great advantage over other players, supposing they can do this without any greater effort or without overtaxing the brain. Few can, however, do so. As a general rule men place their trumps in a place, *i.e.*, nearly always to the right or left of their hand, and whichever they choose—right or left—to that place the trumps go as a matter of course.

Now it does not require a wizard to find out on which side it is, and anyone watching the sorting of the cards will very soon ascertain the number of trumps such a sorter has. This is too obvious to need comment. No one would willingly give a player with a quick eye an advantage over themselves, nor would any honest player give that advantage to his partner for his own benefit. Supposing, therefore, it is a necessity to sort the cards, let the first card taken in the hand remain at the right or left, so that no two hands will be sorted alike. Next, most players sort their cards into suits, and in doing so make a gap or division in the appearance of the fan between each suit, as if one of the staves were broken. By the appearance of the back of the hand, no one ought to know the divisions of the suits, *i.e.*, they should not know the hand is divided into three threes and a four suit. This, with very little care, all players can avoid. Some players have

peculiarities of their own, for not satisfied with playing under the disadvantages we have here pointed out, they make the whole set alternately red and black, so that a careful observer can see which card comes first from the hand, and he will know the number of that suit (say a black), and that the next suit is red, of which he will know the number, and the third, of course, is black again, of which he may know the number, and so by this simple carelessness the whole hand may be counted.

Next they put their suits in rotation, and with careless players this is necessary to avoid an unpremeditated "Blue Peter." Some players turn all their court cards, for fear the blood should run to their heads, and the hearts, spades, and clubs to prevent their points being blunted, and they thus enable the sharp men to count not simply the number of each suit but many of the court cards. It is needless to observe that any man possessed of this knowledge could beat any other man in the play of the cards. Remember, all this takes time, during which the man who does not sort his cards, or who would purposely try to count either of the other hands can be watching. Happily, we do not think there are many men capable of doing what is here pointed out; and of the few that could but a small percentage would; and of the residuum, a large proportion would not have the skill necessary to play on the information thus obtained. The danger is not therefore great, but we insist that honest men should never by carelessness or inattention to simple matters give roguery a chance at the Whist table. Never trust to the detective for catching the thief. Take the best precautions to prevent the theft being committed.

Do not wait until the horse is stolen before rushing to the stable to lock the door.

We have placed the cart before the horse. Before there can be any sorting, and *à fortiori* before anyone can look over another's hand, there is a little subject on which we ought to have had our say, we mean "dealing." Deal the cards close to the table. Let the part of the card that first leaves the hand proceed in a direction slanting downwards. We were playing a few days ago; one of the finest players in London sitting by our side and watching the game. Our adversaries were three to our love; this gentleman whispered very audibly, "Throw down your cards, your adversaries are four by honours and they have every court card in the pack." We never give up without we see the game completely gone. So many good players think the game is over before it is, that whilst there is room for hope we hope on; in fact our motto is *Nil desperandum*, which, years gone by, was translated by a comic poet into "never give up." Moreover, at this particular moment we thought the speaker was joking, or perhaps we did not think at all. However, it turned out he was correct; our opponents had all the honours and nearly every court card. We turned round to reprove the speaker for talking about the hands whilst the game was progressing.

Bystanders are easily led into making remarks, and we fancied this one was past a joke. The speaker in reply said, "You think I had been looking at your adversaries' hands; I had done nothing of the sort—I saw all the cards as your partner dealt them."

Reader, will you put this in your pipe and smoke it? If you have done us the honour to read the above,

though we write for a thousand years we can say nothing more forcible to show the importance of dealing well, by which we mean dealing so that no player can see the cards whilst the deal is taking place.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

THE ETIQUETTE OF THE GAME.

Dr. Johnson knew not the word etiquette. When it was anglicised we are not aware, but it is a word which exercises considerable influence in this country, more so than many of us are prepared to admit. That there was etiquette before etiquette was known to the English is tolerably certain, for our forefathers were more formal and ceremonious than we. Formality and ceremony are practically abolished, and Queen Etiquette reigns in their stead. We wish Dr. Johnson had given us a definition of this word. It is etiquette that makes the judge wear a full-bottomed wig in hot weather, and none but revolutionary judges, like Barons Martin and Bramwell, would ever dream of trying a cause without those hairy appendages. We suppose that those learned judges would try a case quite as well if their heads were cool, but they suffer the inconvenience in silence because etiquette requires them to do so. Nor must it be imagined that these wigs are of no value. Many a prisoner looks upon a judge with more respect because of this same wig and the paraphernalia of trumpets, processions, and javelin men that accompany his going out and coming in. We suppose etiquette, or the disregard of it, causes more quarrels than any subject under the sun. Mrs. A. is

handed down to dinner before Mrs. B., hence Mrs. B. and the hostess are at daggers, owing to the ignorance or infatuation of the unfortunate host. We trust we have said sufficient to show that this is an important subject, and not to be lightly thrown aside. Etiquette, although not unknown to the savage, makes the difference between the savage and the civilised man. Let the gentleman disregard etiquette, and he at once falls from his high estate to that of the savage. Etiquette means attention to little matters not prescribed by law. Sometimes it is the oil that smooths the wheels of state, at others it enables men to answer the angry with a quiet tongue, with calm and imperturbable feelings and unruffled features instead of a blow. Supposing etiquette to have a civilising effect on the human species, it is, in many instances, a great curse. It is etiquette that induced the grinders at Sheffield to steal the bands from the non-society men's wheels. Perhaps the etiquette of the less-educated class is of comparatively small importance, but it is only necessary to look at the etiquette of the most highly-educated set of men in the kingdom—the Bar —to see that etiquette may have a very baneful and demoralising tendency. The Bar often require the client to employ two counsel when one would do the work quite as well. They require in many cases three counsel to appear when the client desires to drop one as useless. The Bar do not hesitate to take fees for work which they know they cannot perform. Surely such conduct would be dishonest in any other profession, and unless the Bar had become hardened to such crimes by means of etiquette their minds would revolt at such enormities.

But if etiquette be important in the ordinary affairs of life, how much more so is it in the card-room and at the Whist table! Etiquette is often needed. At Whist, etiquette is a substance. If a man will not send his card or call at another's house, he may hope to be forgiven; but at Whist the man who does not attend to the etiquette prescribed by good taste and the usages of the table, this offender will be properly shunned. Etiquette in Whist phraseology is a term synonymous with honest. The men, therefore, who commit breaches of etiquette are, in our opinion, dishonest, and would, if they had a chance, pick a pocket or rob a church. Inattention to the etiquette of the game causes more bickering and heartaches than the worst players out of Bedlam, and goodness knows the bad players are nearly sufficient to drive ordinary people mad. But because men are bad players, surely there is no occasion to add to their other offences the total disregard of etiquette. Some men are so thick-skinned that nothing short of a penalty will ever prevent their breaking a rule.

These sort of men drop a card face upwards and snatch it up again, and think they have done something clever, instead of having committed a heinous offence. Or they lead out of turn, and when ultimately they get the lead they send out the exposed card like a flash of lightning, and again they think they have done something clever, deserving the praise of their partner for their 'cuteness—'cuteness which is so closely allied to low cunning. This is the conduct of a common skittle-sharper or swindler, and yet the men who do such tricks think themselves honourable men. If they are spoken to on the subject they will allege they did not play in a hurry; that they took their time, and their

adversary had a reasonable opportunity for inflicting the penalty. Of course they do not in their hearts believe that they gave a reasonable time. They are simply lying, and hope to get out of their troubles by so doing; so the carelessness is to be covered by cunning, and the cunning, if necessary, by lying, and this at a game undertaken for amusement. Banging the cards down on the table, playing with emphasis, is another point contrary to etiquette, and which those players who are not gentlemen are constantly forgetting. We suppose there is some pleasure in knocking one's knuckles on the table. It makes a noise and pleases some children; or perhaps it annoys an adversary, or perhaps it is simply the act of an uncouth man utterly thoughtless on the subject. We presume it is only the act of a bear making this noise. A bear would hardly do so in the drawing-room. Why such behaviour is to be permitted out of ladies' society is a mystery we are unable to solve. But to bang the cards about is not always the act of the bear; it is sometimes that of the bear and cheat combined, *e.g.*, when the player is commencing or completing a "Blue Peter." We suppose bears do not reflect; but any way, bears are not necessarily dishonest. The big, burly uneducated men may not know the etiquette of a game, but they do know that cheating forms no part thereof. To play in this marked manner is cheating as bad as that of the common thimble-rigger. Nay, it is worse, for there is some skill in taking up the pea, and there is no skill required to hit the table hard. Drawing the card before the proper time is often an innocent kind of cheating—innocent, we say, because it is generally done by simpletons who do not recollect the effect of their acts. If

done by design, of course it is common cheating. Sometimes the hesitation of the player has the same effect, and we have seen a player hesitate with only one of the suit in his hand. This may have been done innocently from absence of mind, or it may have been cheating. It may have been an act to induce others to believe that the hesitating player had another of that suit. The fact is, irregularities at cards are so closely allied to cheating, that to draw the line between the one and the other is nearly impossible. The cheat will do his cheating apparently with regularity and decorum; whilst the careless and thoughtless person, intending nothing wrong, cheats in a barefaced manner. The law cannot draw the line. It does so as sharply as it can, but it cannot mark out every offence. The common law, so people imagine, failed. Hence equity was introduced to assist the law. Equity has not yet been introduced at Whist, but should that event ever take place the man who draws a card before his turn—who tries to evade the laws as they are written—who bangs the cards on the table in asking for a Blue Peter, or to inform his partner that the card led is a winning card, these, we say, will then meet with their reward; but until then we are driven to rely on etiquette, and the desire of the players to do what is right. An irregularity at the Whist table should never be passed over. The smallest infraction of the rules should be severely commented on, and if players persist in constant breaches of the proprieties of the game they should be tabooed.

The pretence of ignorance as to etiquette is often as disgusting as the commission of the offence. Repeat day after day that such a thing is wrong and you find the

offence again committed, and again you receive a denial that the offending party knew that he was doing wrong, and thus insult is added to injury. The faults here referred to are nearly always committed by the desperately bad players. Oh! that these men would bear in mind the trouble and annoyance they cause by their inattention, ignorance, and want of common observation, and remembering this and that no player ever refuses to join the table at which they play; that they reciprocate the Whist-player's sentiments, and try to add to, rather than detract from the harmony of the evening. Probably if the bad players could realise the misery they cause they would scarcely play at all, but this no one can reasonably ask. The game is for the bad as well as for the good players, but we may reasonably request that the bad players should learn to observe the little niceties of the game, if not with greater caution, with as much care as their superiors.

For the information of those who pretend not to know, we add a few examples. It is not etiquette or honest to claim the game when you have it not, or honours under like circumstances, or a trick more than you have, or to dispute the score of your adversaries who have properly scored. It is not etiquette, either by looks, smiles, frowns, or gestures, to intimate any knowledge, good or bad, of your hand. It is not etiquette to ask what are trumps, to induce your partner to lead them. It is not etiquette to hesitate in the play of your cards, to show that you could have played differently. It is not etiquette to frown or look savage when your partner plays a suit you do not want. It is not etiquette for a bystander to make any remarks

as to the score or game, or as to a revoke, although the same is claimed, until he is appealed to on the subject; nor is it etiquette for him during the game, by any look or gesture, to make any comment on the goodness or badness of the play. It is not etiquette to ask to see the last trick, for the purpose of informing your partner the necessity to recollect something about that suit; nor is it etiquette to ask to have the cards placed, with the like object. It is not etiquette to say which was your card played to the trick after they have been touched for the purpose of being gathered, even though the question is put to you. Having led a winning card, it is not etiquette to draw out another ready to play, because you thereby intimate to your partner that the card led is the best. It is not etiquette to scold your partner, to chuckle at your adversary's bad play, or to deride your partner when he possesses less knowledge of the game than yourself.

It is not etiquette to get into a passion and throw down the cards. It is not etiquette for the young Whist-player to deride or be angry with his seniors. If, in dealing, you expose an ace, and your adversaries elect to let the deal stand, it is not etiquette to misdeal. In dealing, it is not etiquette to count the cards on the table or in the hand, and then declare you have not done so to avoid a misdeal. It is not etiquette to bet with an outsider without first offering the chance to your adversaries. The breach of this law causes more anger than almost any other. It is not etiquette to wrangle with your opponent on any disputed point when there is a bystander to whom you can refer. Such bystander having decided, although you think him wrong, it is not etiquette further to argue the

point, but it is etiquette to submit with a good grace. Having revoked once, it is not etiquette to revoke again to cover your blunder. Nor is it etiquette to make any exclamation calling your adversary's attention to the fact that you have revoked. The excitable and talkative players may bear this in mind, and they will do well to remember that at Whist nothing should be said during the play of the hand.

It must not be supposed that in the space allotted to these hints we can give in detail all the points that are not etiquette. Nothing but a nice sense of honour and a due regard to the feelings of your adversaries, and what is due from yourself as a gentleman, can guide you on such a subject; but we have said enough, if our lucubrations are not in vain, to make players reflect on these subjects. The only excuse that can be pleaded for this wretched class of non-observers of etiquette is that the booksellers have entirely neglected the etiquette of Whist. We have the etiquette of the ball-room, the etiquette of everything else under the sun. Why have the Whist-players been left out in the cold? For sixpence any other class can know what to do and how to write, but Whist-players have no guide but one page.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

THE MODEL PLAYER

A friend sent us the following suggestion:—"You might give a fancy description of the model player and a counter-description of the player to be avoided—

with every little courtesy attended to by the one, and the irritating ways of the other. You have had ample experience of both."

Our experience of the model player is nil. We are blessed with very little imagination—what we describe we have seen, so that as regards the model player we feel very much like making bricks without straw; and surely we have described the very disagreeable players sufficiently often. We remember only two model players. The first was a dear old fellow who, under no circumstances, at the card table could be made angry, though, away from the table, he had a temper of his own; but he never knew anything that went wrong except when he made a revoke, and then he expressed his regret. It is difficult to get angry if you have not an apparent cause. It is impossible to get angry unless you feel aggrieved, and our friend never knew his partner committed a blunder. The other model was Barnes. He once quarrelled with his dearest friend, and neither could be induced to give way for a month, and during this month Barnes was a model player. Ordinarily he was not, for he used to mutter to himself, and he teased the other players by incessantly shuffling the cards; but during this month he was on his guard. This, however, could hardly be the model player, because he was throughout influenced by the feeling that he and his friends were at enmity. He was on stilts, and not natural.

There are a great many players models up to a certain pitch, as there are certain lunatics sane on all but one subject. They keep perfect control over themselves, until some particular player enters the room; then their features are suddenly clouded, and we know

that a storm is imminent. Others get on smoothly until some outsider ventures to say that their play was bad, or a partner who has thrown away trick after trick, and game after game, begins to lecture. The bad play is bearable, but the lecture is too much. One very quiet player is put out because the cards are placed in the wrong position, and a deal out of turn is the consequence. Another gets angry when having asked "no heart?" the partner forgets the ordinary courtesies of life. He will not look at his hand and revokes. Another gets angry because of his partner's stupidity —wanting one trick to win he finesses ace two; while yet another is unhappy because his partner must exhibit his knowledge and memory. He trumps his partner's winning cards and leads out triumphantly the seven of a plain suit, which he believes is the best, and finds the eight against him. If the player knows that the card led is a winning card, and he trumps without an object, he is not only rash, but uncourteous. The model player should be a gentleman, and he should be a good player. He should be quiet and concentrate his whole attention on the game before him. The gentlemen are not numerous, for they are very few in number who are always careful to respect the feelings of others.

In playing a game the object of all should be to add to the pleasure of all, yet how few there are who strive to please! A player commits a blunder from ignorance; it is useless pointing out his blunder. This only makes him nervous and uncomfortable. The bulk of players, when they go wrong, see the mistake they have made, and this is sufficiently mortifying—a gentleman should not add to the pain by harping on this one string. At Whist we appear to be at the mercy of

every one. We do not in private life point out all the faults and vices of those with whom we associate. If we all knew the baseness of our own hearts, and proclaimed them on the housetops, how many would care for our acquaintance? But at Whist all men seem to gloat over our misfortunes and blunders, and they chuckle and exult as if they had done something very clever in seeing our discomfiture. We all play our best; we none of us purposely throw away our own money or that of our partner's. We have not all equal wisdom. We have not all the same means of observation. That which is apparent to the meanest capacity looking at one hand is extremely difficult to see looking at another hand. There are many cases where the chances are equal as to the best mode of play, and it would be strange indeed, if any player were always right. No one would dream of chuckling, because a man in tossing guessed head or tail at the wrong moment. Yet some of these clever men who look on at Whist seem to have nothing better to do than to point out blunders similar in character to this. When the blunder is made why not make the best of it, as in any other walk of life we should all endeavour to do. So little irritates a Whist-player that it is somewhat hard that an outsider should say or do anything to cause that irritation. One player in a thousand may be a Whist genius, and he knows it; and he knows further, that he is the only genius at the table. Is he, therefore, charitable towards his neighbours? Not a bit of it. He thinks his partner ought to know everything that he, the genius, knows, though a moment's reflection would recall to his mind the impossibility of the non-genius ever acquiring a knowledge of the position of the cards

or the skill to take advantage of that knowledge. In the outer world if a gentleman makes an assertion no one contradicts him. Yet, at Whist, if A says we have the odd trick, another player says, "No you haven't," without any hesitation. Is there any necessity for rudeness in the matter. Is it not easy to suggest a mistake, or to say, "I beg your pardon." The one method soothes and the other irritates. As soon as a hand is finished it should be easy to play it over; but if in the first instance the players begin by shouting and wrangling the thread of the game is gone, and that which was easy at first becomes difficult, and sometimes impossible. A loses to B, and A thinks he has paid the amount. Are we more likely to get at the truth by first asserting that "I paid"—"No you didn't," like two children? A cool head is requisite for settling disputes. Whist-players get red in the face about a trifle that wise men would not deem worthy of notice.

The model player will be careful to count his tricks before proceeding to score. If he has a doubt he will appeal to his adversary. He will be careful to remember the number of honours he has before claiming two or four. He will call his score audibly before marking. He will not be content with calling or marking two by honours, whilst the others are talking so that they do not hear the call.

If the counters get displaced he will call the attention of his opponent to what he is doing, and not take the chance of putting up one too many by accident. Having incurred a penalty he will never try to avoid the payment of what is due by haste. Having revoked he will not at the end of the hand throw up his cards to avoid being found out, but will play as steadily as if

nothing had happened. We recently saw a revoke committed, and we subsequently saw the same player cover his revoke by again not following suit. This in Whist is unfair play, and it cannot be too often repeated that a man must not revoke on purpose under any circumstances.

There are certain little matters called etiquette, that it cannot be expected every player should know. There are some who fancy, because they are rich, that therefore they are gentlemen. No greater mistake was ever committed. Etiquette is acquired by education or it may be innate. Etiquette becomes known to some and not to others. Take the case of a club whip.

No one knows how the etiquette came into existence. Yet every man of education, able in purse to comply with a whip, does so, or is shunned and made ineligible to be elected in other clubs. Yet there are certain men who think they can ignore this etiquette, and yet hold up their heads as honourable men. Etiquette in betting is often ignored. The players have a right to all bets before outsiders have anything. Every player knows this, but it is the gentleman alone who first asks the players whether they wish for the bet or not. The cads prefer to make the bets as they please, regardless of the fact that many men willing to bet would not be willing to interfere with bets already made. The model player having betted £5 on one rubber, does not reduce his bet next time, and in private society he does not stand for odds. The model player consults his partner's wishes, nay, even his superstitions. He asks his partner what cards and seats he prefers? He places the cards to be cut square.

If the cards are mixed in cutting he asks his adver-

sary if he would prefer a new cut. He asks his partner if he would like any portion of his bets, and at the end of the rub having lost the odd trick, he makes the best of it, and hopes for better luck next time, instead of asserting as one of our friends always does, that "if we had played differently we might have made five by cards." The model player does not break up the table because he cannot get such high bets as he can at another table. Because he has £50 on this rub, he does not grumble or growl about his luck, when the new-comer can only afford to play for £5. He thinks of the means of his opponents, and does not imply anything to their disparagement because their pocket is not so full as it might be.

The admirers of Whist never seem to tire of speaking of the intellectual capacity of the players at this incomparable game. The lowest qualification acknowledged by the school board for children of the mature age of four would require the pupils to count, one, two, three, four, yet the bulk of Whist-players could not pass this examination.

When the time arrives for cutting out at Whist, no man can count whether he has played one, two, three, or four rubbers. The large majority have only played one. It is no use talking to us about numbers, because practical experience is against the numbers. We assert (figures to the contrary) that if there are four players who have come into the table at one time, and they have in fact played two, three, four, and five rubbers respectively, when two men desire to come in there are no two of these players who have played more than two rubbers, and the majority have only played one. This seems a paradox, but from long observation we

are satisfied that this is true, and that if any mathematician has anything to say on the subject, he must please remember De Quincey's *dictum* that a paradox is a veiled truth.

Gentlemen do not discuss the number of games they have played. They try to recollect, and if in doubt, they give way. There should be no difference between the gentleman and the cad, so far as memory is concerned each should be able to count four, but somehow or other the cad never counts correctly. He has never played more than one rubber.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

BAD PLAYERS.

Some one complains that "it is all very well studying Clay, Cavendish, Cam, and 'The Westminster Papers,' but what use is it? When I have done I never find anyone plays in the manner advised, and my labour is thrown away. The books are only for club players and those that play with club players, and are absolutely useless to us. What we want is advice how to play with the men we meet, namely, the bad players." There is, no doubt, some truth in this observation. The books are for good players, or for those who desire to improve. It is, however, no fault of the books that there are so many bad players, and so few good ones. The books of themselves cannot make good players; they can only point out how—given the necessary amount of brain—persons may become good players, and the chief point the book writers advise (but cannot

enforce) is practice with good players. Our experience is different from our critic's. We do find considerable improvement whenever there is a book player in any set. At first he gets laughed at by the old fogies for being a book player, but in a short time he will bear this with equanimity; and if he perseveres, the younger members of his society will join his ranks, and in a little longer time he will leaven the mass. And such a one must bear in mind that it is not simply because he is a book player that he is laughed at. The probabilities are that he is not only a book player but a bad player. He is either a beginner and therefore not *au fait* with the cards, or the information he possesses may render him ponderous. His mind may be overladen, and the theory may not readily assist his practice, whereas the men who laugh have their wits about them. The theory is of little use unless it comes readily and at the right time.

All the knowledge in the world would be of no use at Whist if it came a second too late. Notice this in any Whist learner. He sees what he ought to have done the moment the card has left his hand, and is thereby disheartened. He is beginning to improve. He sees his error, and that is a great point in his favour, and not, as it seems to him, to his prejudice. Before he saw his mistakes, there was no chance of improvement. The moment he sees, he begins to play better. The argument, therefore, of our critic is not, in our opinion, sound. The man who plays by book will have an advantage, even though he will not have the full advantage that he would have if he played with other book players. But a knowledge of the proper leads, where others have not that knowledge, is

of itself an advantage. The leads have been worked out with great labour and judgment by the best players of the day, and this information alone would not be acquired by a muff in a lifetime. The knowledge of the principle that requires a player to lead from the longest suit, instead of leading at haphazard, is again a great advantage that will tell with effect, no matter against whom he plays; and this lead from the long suit is not simply advantageous because, on the average, it wins more tricks, but because, at the same time, the player plays to the least disadvantage supposing his partner cannot assist him. The old bad players never realised the fact that to open a weak suit placed the third hand in a disadvantageous position.

We have given the simplest illustrations that occur to us to exemplify our proposition, but a thousand more might be instanced to show that a book player need be no worse a player because he plays by book.

But if our critic means to accuse us of playing the same game with a bad player that we should play with a good, we answer that his accusation is not founded on fact. We should do nothing of the sort. If our partner cannot adapt himself to our play there is no possible reason why we should not adapt ourselves to his, and, undoubtedly, so far as our powers would permit, we should do so. The question then arises, how should we adapt ourselves to the play of a bad partner? And this is a question much more easily asked than answered. It is simply a matter of observation; but it would be a great mistake to suppose that if two men were to sit down to the same table, opposed to two strangers, the good players would not obtain an

advantage over the bad players. Each apparently have an equal chance, but the practised book player will notice the irregularities of the play with greater effect than the bad players. The same result happens when two individuals, the one a musician, the other not, listen to one of Beethoven's airs. If the music is well executed both may be charmed; but if mistakes are made (we do not mean merely if a false chord is struck) the former will detect them oftener than the latter. The good player of Whist having detected a peculiarity of play soon notices whether his partner plays in the same way again. If he does, then there is system in his madness; and given system the good player gets what he wants. It is true the system may be bad, but so long as it is a system the good player will take advantage of it. The good player would have a keynote on which to strike; the bad player would have none. Our critic may now remark that some key must be given in order that directions on play may be laid down. Unless there be a system of some sort, no book writers can give advice of any value, and therefore it is that the books are, on this point, almost silent. The critic would find fault with our Whist writers because they do not teach him to read. They cannot do so without first teaching him the letters that form the words. It is very disagreeable to submit to the drudgery of learning the alphabet; but the greatest genius and the veriest dunce (unless the latter is always to remain the superlative dunce) must go through the same work. So (as Whist writers) we say we cannot teach Whist without first teaching the alphabet thereof. Learn it if you will, but do not find fault with us for teaching badly because you decline to learn the first lesson.

In laying down any principles of play with bad players we should divide them into classes. There is the bad player who is a book player, and we would always play book with him, except when there was a certainty of getting the tricks we want with our own cards. This is due to the learner. If he tries to learn, it is our business to assist him. If we play false with him he will distrust us, as we should distrust him if he played false cards with us; and supposing our critic to be a learner every good player will play book with him, and he will then, at any rate, get some advantage from his book knowledge.

Then there is the bad player who knows something, but how much or how little no one can say. There are, again, bad players who know nothing, and bad players who are such only because they have no book knowledge. These are bad players, perhaps, only because they never had an opportunity of playing with good players; or because, playing continually with bad players, they have found it necessary to play false cards whenever they have a chance, by reason of the inherent badness of the players with whom they play. This soon becomes a habit, out of which many players never emerge. Give them a good player for a partner, and yet they can no more change their ways than the leopard can change his spots. The tree has grown as it was planted, and must break rather than bend before the storm. Our critic imagines, doubtless, that rules can be given for play with each and all of these, and with one hundred other varieties of the genus bad player. This is impossible. No human being could do it, and if he tried it would take a lifetime to provide for all the bad players' peculiarities,

and no one would be any wiser for the trouble that had been taken. At the same time, no doubt each player when he sits down with bad players does play on some sort of rule. Thus we should return our partner's lead immediately ninety-nine times out of a hundred, no matter how good our own hand, and clear the suits as we went on, to enable him to recollect the cards. We should always let him ruff when we could, because that gives a bad player greater pleasure than any other point in the game. We should not take his forces unless it suited our hand. We should not Blue Peter. We should assume that he would never know whether a card of less value than a queen was the best, and therefore should not lead it if we cared whether he trumped it or not. If our long suit were established, we should try to get rid of our partner's trumps as quickly as possible to prevent his stopping our suit. We should give him credit for recollecting more accurately the cards in his own suit than in his adversaries' or our own. We should abandon our strong suit, unless we were very strong in trumps, when our partner showed that he had nothing in it, and lead a single card. We should never return the best of three in our partner's suit, nor lead originally the highest of three in a suit which we knew by inference must be his strongest suit. He would be sure to misunderstand us if we did so and abuse us accordingly, and he could not count our hand in any event. He will always finesse at the wrong time, and never at the right, and therefore it is much safer to lead the lowest of a suit of three.

As a rule we should never make a regular lead, except when strong enough to play against our partner and

two adversaries. We should never attend to any rules. We should play as confusedly as possible, but never hesitate in what we did. If we ever played straightforwardly, we should do so in our partner's suits, and play as irregularly as possible in our adversaries' suits. We should let our partner take up the tricks; he may thereby recollect something he otherwise would not. We should assume our partner to have led from a single card, and if he were to lead ace and another, then we should conclude that he could not have any more. This is the only certain lead that ever comes from a bad player's hand. With anything like good cards we should lead trumps every time we got in. If our partner led trumps we should assume it to be the only one he had until the contrary was shown to be the case, or that he had led through an honour; and we should always expect to be scolded if we returned the trump up to an honour, or if we lead trumps, originally an honour being turned up to our right. We should not return trump at any time unless it suited our hand. We should assume that we could do no damage to our partner by humbugging, and that we might do him good. If he played a king third hand we should still consider there was a chance of his having the queen, but a certainty that he had not the ace; in short, we should draw the opposite inferences from his play that we should from a good player's. We should do all those things we ought not to have done, and leave undone those things we ought to have done, and thus reverse the order of Nature.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

THE CAUSES OF BAD PLAY.

There are some that assume, because we play better than our predecessors, that, therefore, we play well; but the most ordinary observer cannot help feeling astonished at the general badness of the play. We purpose to assume the fact, and to inquire why it is that men play so ill. The most obvious cause is a want of knowledge of the leads. We have before written on this subject, but our remarks have been misunderstood. We say no man can play Whist unless he masters the leads. He may get to know the leads by experience, or he may learn them from books; but the object of learning the leads is not to make more tricks, but to enable the player to know what the other players lead from. It is not the lead, as a lead, that is of so much importance as the knowledge and power to draw inferences from the fact that a given lead should tell. Thus, if a player leads from king, nine, four, three, and he leads the four he will make just as many tricks in this suit as if he led the proper card (the three); but if he leads the four his partner is in the dark as to the position of the three. The three may drop on the second round, when the partner is under the impression that the lead is from four, three only. He has an interval of doubt and uncertainty without any necessity for it, and whilst in this fog the opportunity of saving or winning the game may be lost. To take a common case, after the second round, the leader's suit is cleared, and it may now be advantageous to lead a trump. Instead of

going for game, the partner has no choice but to play, as he thinks, for a ruff. Unless a player knows what it is his partner and adversaries lead from, he must play in the dark. Yet when we point out these facts to the more elderly players they either get angry, and say we are abusing them, or they declare we want to make them book players.

Closely allied to this subject of the leads is the difference between weak and strong leads. Every tyro at the game, before he sits down to play, ought to know the distinction. Yet we see games lost day by day by players persisting in treating a forced weak lead as a strong lead, and going on with the suit with a perseverance worthy of a better cause.

Whist is a difficult game, and unless it is played in a simple and straightforward manner it is above the comprehension of ordinary mortals. There are many players who appear to think they best attain their end by making the game incomprehensible to every one, and we suppose they trust to their own acumen to unravel the maze of their own creation.

Many of the old players show remarkable ignorance as to the position of the cards. This is not from stupidity, as many appear to imagine. The real reason is that they are spoken to by the cards in an unknown tongue. They play by no system themselves, and they do not expect any system in others; and, knowing not the position of the cards, they fail to take advantage of the information that ought to be before them. Yet, strange to say, these gentlemen, of all others, make the game unnecessarily difficult. If they cannot see the simple position, how is it likely they will see and take advantage of the more difficult ones? The

point that is of the most importance in the game is attention. We must be all conscious that there are many hands played mechanically. Our mind is in sleeping, and we remain in a dreamy state with our eyes open, but incapable to take in half that is really visible. There can be but few players who have not noticed for themselves the haziness with which they play if part only of the first trick has escaped their notice. To miss one card in the first trick has often produced in us a state of misery and uncertainty throughout the hand. If this be true of the first trick, or a single card in it, see to what lengths this carelessness may go. If a player does not realise the information to be derived from two tricks, he must be at sea for the rest of the hand. It is not simply that he has missed a "Blue Peter," although we are bound to say they often commit this enormity. They have taken no trouble to ascertain the position of any of the cards or suits led. They have drawn no inferences from what they have seen, and they are thrown back on what some of our players call "intuition," but which we should rather call a "happy-go-lucky kind of play," unpleasant to every one but the adversaries. We do not mean in any way to decry "intuition," but that valuable quality should not be brought into play except on those occasions where reason is at fault. We do not want the supernatural until the natural powers are exhausted. One of the most common forms of inattention that ruins many games is where a part of a trick is missed. An uncertainty has arisen as to which was the partner's and which the adversaries' cards, and on the second round our impetuous friend imagines his adversary has "Blue Petered." We would confiden-

tially urge the player who has got into this predicament not to make matters worse by acting on his surmise. At the end of the hand let him acknowledge his fault and do penance; but do not ruin the game by leading the trump with this doubt in his mind. He has brought upon himself doubt and trouble; he need not add to the offence. In a pecuniary point of view, if your partner has "Blue Petered" any way, you cannot lose much by not answering it. If, on the other hand, you being weak and your partner being weak, under the erroneous impression that he has signalled you, you lead trumps, you but play into your adversaries' hands, and ruin the chance of saving a game which otherwise you might have done. Of the effect of inattention to the fall of the small cards we may mention an instance we witnessed to-day. A's hand consisted of clubs king, ten, nine, and spades (trumps) two; X's hand, hearts two, spades four, diamonds seven, eight; B's hand, spades ace, clubs two, three, diamonds five; Z's hand, hearts ace, queen, four, three. A had the lead, and wanted every trick to win the game. He knew that his partner had the trump ace, and that there was only one other trump in, but he did not know that his partner had a club to give him back, and he, therefore, led the club, which was trumped by X, and thus the game was lost. Now the position of the two in every suit should be known by every observant player, and yet here was a player of considerable experience who knew not the position in his own suit of the two or the three which was sufficient for his purpose. We know there are men who consider themselves high-class players who never think of looking to such simple matters as this. We cannot agree with their estimate

of their strength. Whist, which to many is a mystery, is generally a question of observation, and he who does not recollect the small cards is not a Whist-player in our acceptation of the term. Included in the general term inattention, we may name the state of the score. The difference between good and bad play consists in this attention, or want of attention, to the score; nay, the forgetting the turn-up card alone loses hundreds of games.

The strong, energetic, excitable beings that play Whist generally play with more attention than others. They appear to concentrate their thoughts better upon the game than their cold-blooded friends. The hot-headed men often play much worse than the cold-blooded, for the simple reason that a hot-headed Whist-player comes into the world full-fledged. He has not the time or the patience to learn the rudiments of the game, otherwise he would prove a most dangerous antagonist.

Over and above the reasons why Whist is played so ill is the most obvious one—that Whist requires an intellect above the ordinary mass. It requires not only the attention to observe the fall of the cards, the faculty to draw the inferences as the hand proceeds, in order that at the end of the hand the position of the cards may be known, but the position being known, then comes in the faculty, ingenuity to take advantage of the position for your own benefit. For example, the position of the cards being known and trumps being out, A has king, two of a plain suit, the king and nine being the major tenace. Z, an opponent, has knave, eight, three. It is A's lead. A child of eight years of age (as the old books have it) ought to know

that by leading the smallest card and playing the lead in Z's hand, A must get two tricks, and by leading the king he must lose two tricks; yet nine times out of ten, from want of attention and want of thought, the king is lead in this position. This is a double-dummy faculty which is comparatively little known in this country. Indeed, we believe the game double-dummy is quite in its infancy here, and that we could not for a moment compete with the double-dummy players of the Continent. How little we know may be judged by the very few players who can ascertain the true solution of Mr. F. H. Lewis's beautiful problems. We can scarcely recall one problem that has been found out by examination of the hand without playing the cards out; and although we are glad to see the young players solve the problems by playing out the cards in different ways, the highest class players ought to solve them with a few minutes' study. At any rate, until they do this they cannot be considered fine double-dummy players.

There are players—we use the term by courtesy—who do not count their cards, and others there are who profess to count them but do not. Many curious stories are related on this head, as, for instance, where a rubber was played through with forty-eight cards, and of that other apocryphal story (we hope) where an absent gentleman, after five cards were played, of which he had won two, put his eight cards face downwards and lit his cigar, and, instead of taking up his own cards, placed in his hand the tricks he had won, which happened to be all trumps. He placed the cards on the table, and claimed game; and the story goes that the claim was allowed. It is scarcely fair to call

this want of attention, but in our own experience how many games have been lost by a card dropping under the table. The carelessness in exposing cards is a frightful source of loss, and the over-anxiety to get to the end of the hand, which induces men to put their cards on the table, and call game when game they are not, has lost many a small fortune. The outsiders are a constant cause of inattention. Too many of these gentlemen fancy they know more of the game than they do, and their criticisms are often unjust and occasionally ridiculously wrong. There is no player who attends to the game that is not conscious of the many mistakes he commits, and an outsider who talks incessantly is often the cause of the mistake that he so viciously points out. There are some men whose very presence, as lookers-on, causes irritation and annoyance, and when they audibly criticise the play they induce a state of mind not adapted to the exercise of the best Whist faculties.

FORCING.

The bad players are divided into two classes. The one set plays by rule, the other by instinct. There are some subjects on which rules cannot be laid down with precision, and hence those who play by rule make more blunders than usual when their sole guide is silent. Whilst, on the one hand, we desire all players to know and understand the rules that have been laid down by the leading authorities on the subject, on the other hand, we wish to see the reading class use more

frequently their faculties of observation and reason. There is no point requiring more judgment than the subject with which we head this paper, and there is none on which so little can be written to guide the reader. The object of the force is either to gain tricks, by means of your partner's trumps, or to reduce your opponent's strength by making him play his trumps. The more you weaken your opponent the better chance you have of success in establishing your long suits, and the less chance he possesses of bringing in his. In forcing your partner you must be guided always by the state of the score—a point we often endeavour to enforce without seeing that marked improvement in the players that we should certainly perceive if proper attention were given to the subject. You should not force your partner unless you have four trumps, including an honour. This is the rule at the commencement of the hand. You must not force your partner when you are weak in trumps; but the rule is not to be taken into consideration when the only way to win or save a game or point is by forcing, no matter how weak you are. The rule not to force when you are weak is, we think, tolerably well observed by the dullest players; but, acknowledging the rule, so many games are lost later on by not forcing, that the rule—so good in itself and so inherently sound—becomes a disadvantage to those who will not force when the proper time has arrived for so doing. To follow rules is good, but the object of the player is not to follow rules but to win. Being weak, we do not force our partner early in the game, because, no matter how great that weakness, we hope that our partner may be sufficiently strong to outweigh that weakness. Our first hope is to

win the game; our first duty is to save it. Early, therefore, we do not force; later on we do. Early we force if our adversaries are playing a strong trump game, for the purpose of preventing our trumping, or if he has signalled for trumps. This is, of course, one of the intimations we have of our partner's weaknesses, viz., that our adversary is strong, and we must often act on this suggestion; but in so doing care and judgment are required, for although one hand is strong our partner's hand may be equally so, or even stronger, and we may do irreparable mischief to his hand by a force. Early we force if our partner has given an intimation of a desire to trump, which he may have done by leading from a singleton, or weakness, or by returning an adversary's lead; or we force if we have a reasonable chance of a cross ruff, or if our partner has been forced and has not led trumps. This last is a rule that has been established by custom, and later on by authority, but it is a rule the observance of which we much dislike. It is a two-edged weapon, placed in the hands of our partners so often for the purpose of ruining a good hand that we cordially wish it had never been introduced, and the rule itself is often, we think, misunderstood. The rule really means, if originally our partner had a lead and did not lead trumps, and he then got forced, and nothing in the meantime has occurred to change the nature of the game—as, for instance, that our partner's suit is still uncleared—then we are justified in forcing him. If this modified reading of the rule be the true one, as we think it is, then there is reason in the rule. If our partner had not sufficient strength to lead trumps, and he is then forced, it follows he is not strong enough to lead trumps now; but if in

the meantime he has been enabled, by the assistance of his partner, to get his suit cleared, he may still retain the chance with his one trump less to bring in his suit, and if we then continue to force him we destroy that chance *in toto*. The rule, as it is constantly practised, of forcing your partner, for no other reason than that he has been forced before, is, we think, a foolish observance, or a misapplication of the rule. If our partner has failed to clear his suit it is probably safe to go on with the force, but if his suit is established we should not like to do so without a considerable knowledge of the position of the cards, and an utterly hopeless feeling of the chance of success by another line of play. A common position such as this constantly arises: A has the second best of his adversary's suit guarded; B, A's partner, has been forced in that suit; A gets in and forces again, forgetting altogether that no harm can come to him in that suit. The adversary can make but one trick, and he will make it just the same whether you lead it or not, with this difference, that B will trump the inferior card of the suit instead of the best, and the second best will be left useless, except for the purpose of forcing B again. Whereas if A is quiet, X or Z may lead the best, which B will trump, and A will be left with the master card of the adversary's suit. This so often occurs, and we have so constantly seen players scolded for not forcing in this position, that we think our time will not be wasted in explaining that what to ordinary minds is tolerably obvious, but which a large number of players never seem to realise. Having the second best of your adversary's suit it is advisable, nine times out of ten, to remain quiet. Weak or strong, it is not advisable in this position to force your partner.

You are never too weak to force your adversary. Here again is a rule with a certain amount of truth in it, and although it is modified by other rules, as that "You should not force the weak hand, but the strong, and never both," the rule with its modifications is of no value, unless the player has his wits about him. The primary duty of a weak hand is to force the strong hand of the opponent to reduce his strength, and the rule that you can never be so weak that you cannot afford to force your adversary applies only when you have nothing to guide you as to the strength or weakness of your opponent. When you are absolutely ignorant on this subject you are never so weak that you cannot afford to force, but this ignorance should never last long. After a few cards are played you ought generally to tell which is the hand to fear, and the moment you ascertain which is the weak hand it will not pay, because you are weak, to force that hand. To do so is only to play the adversary's game.

The two worst faults that can be committed at Whist are—1. To force your partner after he has led trumps. 2. To play a card of which neither of your adversaries have one, so as to enable the weak hand to trump and the strong to get a discard.

It may not be out of place at this moment to speak of the words strength and weakness, because if the terms are misunderstood our preaching will necessarily be of no avail. The strength which justifies a player in forcing his partner, we have seen, is four trumps with an honour, but the strength and weakness of which we are now speaking are unknown quantities, that can be only ascertained by observation. A player is strong who leads trumps, but even this of itself is not suffi-

cient evidence. The trump may be led from weakness in trumps; as, for instance, if a player leads a nine, and you have in your hand a ten, or the ten is played to the current trick, you are tolerably certain that the nine is the best of the leader's suit, and the player has told you that he is weak in trumps but strong in cards. It would not do because a player has led such a trump to force him. Whereas if he had led a two, showing that he had four of the suit, or a nine, with nothing in your hand or on the table to show that he has not led from king, knave, ten, nine, this hand you see at once is strong, and you force him accordingly. Strength may be denoted by forcing his partner, because unless the player has the requisite strength, except under the special circumstances we have mentioned, such as asking to be forced, which should be as apparent to you as to the player, you know as soon as the player forces his partner that he has four trumps to an honour, and therefore strength. Strength, again, may be shown by asking for trumps, by refusing to trump a doubtful card. Great strength by refusing to trump a winning card, and so on. Weakness in like manner is denoted by trumping doubtful cards, by refraining from forcing his partner, and by the leads. If, for instance, the player leads out aces and kings and makes every trick he can, you know that, excepting as to the cards led, he is weak, because if he had good cards and trumps he would lead trumps. It may not be easy to give a rule that will hold good as to what denotes strength or weakness. This can only be learnt by reading the game as it proceeds, feeling as it were the object the players have in view, as by playing strengthening cards; returning the partner's lead instead of opening a suit of his own, and so

on. If a player returns his partner's suit at once you may generally calculate he is weak, because if he were strong, *i.e.*, has four trumps and a suit of any value, he would open his suit because, as we have endeavoured to show in these Papers, the lead is of advantage, and a good player will avail himself of it. Intimations of some kind come very early in the game, and you must be a poor player indeed not to be able to feel which is the strong and which the weak hand.

WINNING PLAYERS—PLAYING FOR "GAME."

The winning players are those who play for "game." This word game is a puzzle to many. We use the word to express so many different things, that there is no room for surprise when anyone fails to understand what is meant by game. There is that ingenious friend of "Pembridge," who, whenever he plays any extraordinary card incomprehensible to others, always declares that he played the game. With a suit divided between himself and his partner, trumps in the adversaries' hands, he leads this suit. He thinks and alleges he has played "the game," and gives reasons for the faith that is in him. Perhaps his reason is that his partner originally led that suit, or perhaps he might force the strong hand, or some other equally good reason or rule when we are dealing with a theory, but not in any way applicable when the position of the cards is known. This, we suppose,

would be called playing a game, although our friend thinks it "the game."

Playing the game, as we have it in the book, generally means playing to the score, *i.e.*, playing to win or to save the point, and if Whist were the object for which men sit down, this is the proper game to play. But would the man so playing be a winner at the end of the year? We doubt. Mr. Clay says that it was found years ago that the French players, by which he meant the forward players, won, and we are inclined to think it is the men who play for game and not for points that win. This is heresy, but it is founded upon the observation of play. If we played £1 points and no bets, the points are of extreme value. The rubber points are worth £2, and so we have the inducement to play for the game, but if this £2 is enhanced by a £5 or a £20 bet, the chance of getting a point is as £1 to £20, and, as the object to be gained is the £20, the risks that we run to gain the £20 are greater than if we played for the point alone. In our present and imperfect mode of Whist-play, when we have the two elements of skill and gambling combined, that which is good play for the game with betting, seems to us bad play for the gambling. To play to win the game, therefore, is the meaning we are now attaching to game. To try to obtain a great score is playing the game. It is not scientific Whist, but we do not play for science, we play to win the stakes, and, so far as our observation goes, the man who plays to win the game, although, of course, he sometimes loses by the operation, is the winning player. At the end of the year he pockets the money, and the cautious player is out of pocket.

This may be imaginative, because we are dazzled by success, but it is also the result of some observation.

It is always a difficult matter to know who has a good balance sheet at the end of the year. Losers we know, and we think we know the winners, but we may be easily mistaken about the winners. We notice that a given player wins day by day, and we do not notice when he loses, so we are likely to exaggerate the winnings, as many stupidly exaggerate their losses. Then again this dashing game, playing for all or none, requires some luck, and luck guarantees a bold style, whereas the man out of luck is too timid to get all out of his hand that is possible. However, for what it is worth, we but give the result of our observations, and our readers must take it at its value.

The prettiest games, both at Chess and Whist, arise from a weak move of the adversary. A good player takes advantage of his opponent's blunders, just as a good general profits by the false tactics of the enemy. If one side makes a bad move, it is no excuse for not taking advantage of it, that you could not imagine that he would play so badly. We are again out of theory. It is sound in theory to keep the second best of your adversary's suit guarded; but if at the end of a hand X has the best of the suit, and Z has the two long trumps, and they want three tricks to win the game, the guard is useless. We have long since left the theory stage of the game. We are in the face of the enemy. We know that if the suit is led, in which we are guarded, the game is over, and it matters not whether we lead it or someone else. We have only to trust to the suit unknown.

It would seem almost too absurd to attempt to do

anything with the "Peter" maniacs. Every day we see such fantastic tricks played with this unfortunate weapon that we long since gave up in despair. Yet one would fancy there were positions, when a sane man, having a decent partner, would refrain from "Petering." Take the case of your adversary being at the score of three. Your partner has no honours. He knows that if you have not two honours the game is over, and he will play accordingly; give him credit for some intelligence. We would not go so far as to say it is never right to "Peter," but we are sure it is very seldom right to do so at this score. Players who "Peter" never seem to look at the reverse side of the medal. They will not see how much they lose by their "Petering." They only see the bright side. If a player leads a small card originally, and third hand wins with the king, suit returned, original leader puts on knave, won with ace, suit returned by adversary, third hand trumps. If you have the queen and all the others left, you may safely play the queen, and this should show your partner that you had the rest of the suit, for he cannot imagine you would play the small card from the queen, knave, and another. It might be that your partner would take the queen for a signal, as being an unnecessarily high card, so if partner has the "Peter" mania we should play the natural card, and also we should play the same with a stupid partner. With a good partner it would be to his advantage to know that we have the rest of the suit. No one should sit down to play for money without a knowledge of the theory of the game. No one should sit down in a club without first knowing the peculiarities of the play, not only of the club as a body, but the peculiarities

of each player. This is easily demonstrated. Perhaps the old maxim, "man and wife will beat the devil," brings the idea home to the mind as well as anything. Of course it is not true, but the fact remains that if an observant couple have played long together they get a better idea of the object of each than any outsider could do. It requires patience to watch attentively the different players, but it would not take long to learn. If you watch each player separately, you can see so much more of the game by seeing the hand than you can ordinarily remember afterwards.

Given, however, this preparatory study, we come to practice what we know. It is quite certain that the man who plays every day will, with equal ability, play better than he who plays once a week. The practice gives readiness, the memory is more certain, the inferences are arrived at more quickly, and with greater certainty, and the general idea of each player comes without an effort, and without any strain. The man does not live who could place the whole of the cards of a hand played quickly the first time he played in his life. Yet how many men with less intellect could do this now. Where a Gladstone or Carlyle would fail, we should succeed simply from habit.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

LAZY PLAYERS.

There are few things less satisfactory than to sit down with a lazy man for a partner. He does not collect or shuffle the cards. He leaves them where they happen to be, instead of putting them in their

proper place; he leans on the table or sits back in his chair, balanced on its two hind legs. He cares nothing for the game, or pretends not to do so. He plays as if to his great intellect, Whist was child's play, and he thinks he plays with the same accuracy and attention as the man who is devoting his whole thoughts to the subject. When the crisis arises (as in the course of events it must) the one player is prepared for the emergency, and the other has to play by chance. The one plays with an accurate knowledge of what he is doing, and the other knows nothing. In the long run vigilance must tell, and the lazy man must be the loser. If you are of a speculative turn of mind, never back a lazy player. We saw a game lost during the last month because a player was too lazy to take up the trump card. The original leader led trump two, second hand put on three, the third played the ten, and the dealer left the trump card as played to the trick. This card was eight, his partner had the nine, and an observant player assumed, as was apparently the fact, that the dealer had no other trump. Later on in the hand his partner could have saved the game had he known or suspected that his partner had a trump, and he failed to take the chance; on which the lazy player, alive only to the loss of the game, scolded his partner for not forcing him. The player had the seven and four of trumps left, and it was from sheer laziness, and nothing else, that made him leave the trump card on the table. It is useless pointing out now that it is advisable to give a good partner a general idea of your hand. It is useless, we say, to talk on the subject when all men, at all hazards, will play false, and all seem determined to give up the partnership principle, and each man

plays on his own account; but even then we see no reason for paying 8d. when 4d. is just as effective. Although the reason we give for the play of the eight was the true one, we have no doubt the player would allege that he often wins by playing dark. No doubt he does. It is not a question of a single example of loss or gain, but which in the long run brings the most satisfactory result. Can a good player make the most of the hand by being misinformed of the position of two trumps in the first round? Sooner or later the time must come for counting his cards, and what is he to place in his partner's hand to fill the place of these two cards? There is no doubt that skill at Whist does tell. To a bad player the loss of a trick here and a trick there seems to be of no consequence, but in the long run each of those tricks lost must mean so many shillings or pounds lost. If in a day's work we lose £1 or £2, at the end of the year our income must be so much the less, and our balance at the bank will be in an unsatisfactory state. If this is so, and we apprehend no one can doubt it, why do not players make the same allowance for the loss of a trick arising from carelessness, inattention, or want of skill? It may be they will make up for it next time, and they may; but then, again, they may not. The loss of a trick is equal to the loss of a point, plus the chance of the rubber points, and winning or losing a rubber often makes a considerable difference to the players and outsiders. Notwithstanding the advantage that the good players have over bad, the difference is more marked by the ignorance of the bad player than the skill of the good player. The good general takes advantage of his adversaries' blunders, but there are more games

lost by the weak and careless play on one side than by the skill of the other.

The careless player is often woken up by the sight of good cards. Then, instead of the listless manner in which he was sitting in his chair, he draws up to the table with an appearance of interest in the matter in hand that he did not previously exhibit. He sits in one position when he has good cards, and in another when he has bad. Watch the faces round the table, nay, watch the way such an one sits, and you can tell at once whether he has a good or bad hand. This is not intentional, but this should not be. By face, voice, gesture, or manner, no intimation should be given of the state of your hand. The game, however, does not consist in playing good cards well, but rather in playing a bad hand well. That there is skill in playing to the score with a good hand no one doubts, but it is far more difficult to play a bad hand well, and the attention to the game is of more importance at one juncture than the other. Probably there is no point in Whist so remarkable to a looker-on as the recklessness with which men make their discards, unless it is the certainty, after three or four rounds and two or three discards, that the reckless player will forget the first discard on each side. We think we have seen more rubbers lost by this last fault than by all other faults put together. No skill is necessary to remember your partner's first discard, and a moment's reflection should tell whether your partner was playing on the assumption that you are strong or weak. Our point is, not that they do not let their minds go through the reasoning process, but that they forget altogether which was the first discard, and of course

they cannot reason on what they have no premises to argue from. After two or three discards the player has to choose a suit to lead, and he intends to play from the information he has obtained of his partner's hand. We venture to say that nine times out of ten it is the last discard alone that the leader now remembers. We do not pretend that this is Whist, but this is the game called Whist as ordinarily played.

There are some who discard only for the purpose of mystifying every one. They seem to take an insane pleasure in throwing away high cards when they have small ones, and if one of these happens to be your partner, and he deceives you, he seems astounded. They have their reward, and with them it is useless to talk. A simple straightforward game is unknown to them. If they win once, they are satisfied for a day's losses, and they take credit for the success, and forget all previous failures. Provided the pockets of themselves and partners will stand it, we see no objection to their style of play, but we do wish they would not try on these little games when their partner's pocket is nearly threadbare. There is a little point that often arises that we submit for the consideration of young players. Original lead of club two won third hand with ace; not returned. Late in the hand the original leader has to continue his suit, and he plays another small card. You want two tricks to save or win the game. You have knave and another left. Which is the best chance of getting these two tricks? Third hand has not king or queen. Leader has not king, or he would have led it. By putting on the knave you may save your partner's king, and thus save the game. We often see this position, and we hardly ever see the

knave put on. The original leader has probably led from queen to four of the suit. If you do not make the knave on the second round, it will fall to the queen on the third. You have lost nothing and may gain. You have done what all Whist-players should do, viz., take a chance in your favour. You make the knave do the duty of the king. The inferior piece has the force of the superior. If a player nowadays (second hand) has ace, king, or ace, king, queen, and the original leader attacks that suit, it is the fashion, no matter what is the strength of the hand, to play the ace. There are positions where the play may be defensible. The players may be so bad that it is best to play for your own hand alone, but then it should be borne in mind that this is not Whist as played on the partnership principle, and can only answer when you have such a preponderance of cards that it does not matter how you play.

INATTENTION.

No observant player can have failed to notice the loss he suffers by momentarily taking his eye off the table. He may be in time to save himself from actual loss, by asking to have the cards placed, but in the meantime he has caused delay and inconvenience to the other players by his inattention. Mr. Clay said the cards speak, but it is useless to speak to a man quite deaf. The partially deaf man in conversation suffers inconvenience. He misses a word here, and a word

there, and proceeds to argue on the assumption that the words he has heard is the substance of a proposition. The words not heard probably modified this. The player who does not notice every card played, but misses a card here or there, or places the cards in wrong order, is in the same predicament as the partially deaf man; the difference being, that over the infirmity we have no control, whilst the carelessness and inattention is our own. The same inattention a little later makes us ask to see the last trick, and hence more delay.

The game is sufficiently difficult without making it more so by our own carelessness. If the language is not easy of comprehension, what shall we say of the learner who wishes to read the hand, and who begins by skipping a word or a sentence every now and then? Can any imperfect reader of imperfect writing expect to succeed under such circumstances? One player has said, by his cards, one thing, and another has told us something else, and the unobservant players do not know whether it be friend or enemy, right-hand or left, that has given the information. The tale that one hand can tell is full of blanks, and the reading of all four is necessarily disconnected. For inattention such as we have hitherto spoken of the player suffers in purse. The only other person aggrieved is his partner, and as we have two adversaries who profit by the mistakes, and the public at large or outside backers are of no consequence, we can afford to go on being inattentive. It is a free country, and why should we be bothered by attending to the work before us. Whist, after all, is but a game of skittles, and why should we not enjoy ourselves

whilst we are at play. An Act of Parliament cannot make men attentive, nor can we. If the love of gain and our partner will not cause players to concentrate their thoughts on the subject in hand, argument and ridicule will glide over their heads as water from a duck's back.

There are some faults that we constantly see at the Whist table that might be mended. If we take another man's cards, or place the collected pack in a wrong position, this must arise from inattention. If we deal out of turn, or permit another to do so, this must be inattention. The laws of Whist are silent on the subject, because the moral law necessarily overrules Whist law. The Whist legislature does not say, thou shalt not steal, and it provides no punishment for the act of stealing another man's deal. We presume it was some such ground as this that prevented our rulers from inflicting a punishment for this offence. It may be that it was thought that as there must be two players in fault—the right dealer and the wrong—the cutter and dealer—no punishment was necessary. The offence was sufficiently guarded against. We never heard the subject discussed, but in our opinion there should be a punishment inflicted on the active sinner. The cards are placed to be cut, and the act of cutting is mechanically performed. The active and passive delinquents are not, in our judgment, on an equality. If a player leads out of turn he is punished, but the second player following suit has done no wrong. The second player is supposed to play mechanically, although he should not do so. He is pardoned because he is led into error by the first player. The distinction is clear in law, and right in theory. The law does not assume

malice prepense in the case of leading out of turn, and yet the law inflicts a severe penalty. So, again, if a player accidentally drops a card he must suffer for the mishap, and by analogy we see no reason why a player who takes another's deal should not suffer some penalty. We throw out the hint for the use of future law-makers. We suggest that it is competent for the Committees of Clubs to make a by-law on the subject. We are averse to by-laws governing games; but we are inclined to think that this might be an exception to the rule, because whether the player who commits the blunder is a member or stranger he would not be incommoded by such a law. Wherever he has played it was his duty to deal in turn, and it would be the same whether the rule were enforced by a penalty or not. If the cards have not been touched or seen, a fair penalty would be to have a fresh deal from the right player, provided no card has been played; and if a card has been seen, the proper dealer should score a point.

We have, however, digressed from our point. Such errors as these can only arise from inattention. In claiming honours, a moment's reflection would tell any player whether he and his partner had honours or not. Why, therefore, not reflect before making the claim? Why give your adversaries the trouble to correct you? Why run the risk of gaining by your own wrong? It is not uncommon to see players draw out one card, and then another. If the player be the leader, the habit is tiresome, and nothing can be said further on the subject; but if the player is not the leader, and he draws out one card and puts it back, and plays another, and at last he follows suit, he has told his partner that he has another of the suit. There is no punishment for this,

but the offence, looked upon from any point of view, is very gross. Attention would rectify this error. Although we all play too fast, it cannot be necessary for any one to draw his card before his turn, and a player who does so, as third or fourth player, is sure to cause a wrangle. Inattention makes us forget the trump card, and who dealt, and therefore who led. To forget the trump card often loses the game, and this absence of knowledge constantly makes the lead incomprehensible.

Whist skill is only developed by the observation of a number of little things, and the combination of all these makes one grand whole. He who will play Whist well, must attend to little things. In Whist, as in the world, our watchword should be, "Attention."

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

WHAT THE CARDS SAY.

All Whist-players understand that the cards speak. Some can comprehend all the cards say, whilst others observe what the high cards say. One mind can grasp the whole subject, whilst another can only notice the salient features. Those who do not observe, read and reason, are card-players but not Whist-players. No one would presume to speak of himself as a French scholar because he knew the names of all the objects that met the eye, but knew not the verbs, or how to join his sentences together. The large majority of Whist-players are in this position; they do not know the verbs; they will not learn the grammar, and yet

they persist in believing themselves good Whist-players. Mr. Clay first illustrated the language in its simplest form when he said, "If second hand, I play the three of a suit, I tell you, in language as plain as I can speak, I have not the two; and, of course, every other card tells something else."

In some of the illustrative Whist hands it is shown how, in certain cases, by drawing the inferences possible, after four rounds are played, nearly every card can be placed, and the game, in fact, becomes one of double dummy only. He who cannot draw these inferences as the game proceeds must play at a disadvantage as against the player who can thus reason. The one player plays with certain knowledge, the other by chance. When such positions occur it is true the bad player may hit on the right card to play, but this, we say, is chance; just in the same way that we may put the cards in a bag, and we may draw out the right one blindfold.

It is wonderful the amount of knowledge one may possess, given sufficient powers of concentration and observation. One would fancy this was sufficient for an ordinary mind; but as we listen to the conversation of the card room we are lost in amazement at the amount of knowledge we are supposed to possess and which we do not. The number of things the cards or the players have told us according to their views, and which we have not understood, is greater than we have the capacity to take in. We think those gentlemen who talk so much might write down for the information of others what they do mean. "You ought to have known that I had the queen, because I put on the king. Who else could have it?" The language they

use does not always mean the same thing. Thus we saw a player, fourth hand, win the knave with the queen, and return the king, taken by the original leader with the ace. Remember, this was the first card led. What are we to understand by this line of play? What has the original fourth player got in the suit? The case occurred twice in one day. In the first instance the fourth player had no more of the suit, and he wanted to ruff, and the player in question said to his partner, "You ought to have known that I had no more"; and in the second case he said, "You ought to have known that I had the best left."

The first lesson we should endeavour to learn is accuracy of language, and if we use a card to express our wishes we must take care that it means the same thing always. We are not very fond of returning our adversaries' leads. We prefer playing our own to our adversaries' game. The return of the lead so early in the game can seldom be forced, and to clear a suit for your opponents can seldom be to your advantage. The king single held up may make the adversary change his tactics. He cannot tell the king is unguarded, but he may be able to tell with perfect accuracy when you play the king you are playing for a ruff, and lead trump at once, his suit being made. By thus playing, therefore, you give not only valuable information to your adversaries, but you give also that most valuable commodity, time.

The most important point in the game is the knowledge when to lead trump. This point requires more judgment than any other, and an early justifiable lead of trump is a tremendous advantage to the side who has his suit cleared, whilst you and your partner are in

the dark as to the other plain suits. The conduct of the game is taken completely out of your hands. You have lost the chance of opening your suit, and lost also the item, time, which you have given to the adversary. If you have but two of one suit you must have a long suit of some sort, and it is better to try to establish that at once. But take the second case, when you have the second and third best of your adversaries' suit. It may be that you have no good suit left. All your others may be so utterly weak that you dare not open either of them without knowing what it is your partner wants. The lead may then be forced upon you, but if you have a four suit, or a suit with high cards in it, we prefer even that to returning our adversaries' suit. You use the element, time, in getting the new suit cleared. You can protect your adversaries' suit, and this your partner knows, and with this information to guide him he may be able to lead trump with effect as soon as he gets in, where otherwise he dare not do so, and he will probably lead trump if he is safe in the third plain suit. By playing your adversaries' game instead of your own you fail to give your partner information of the state of your hand, to which he is fairly entitled. You let him play blindfold instead of with his eyes open. You give him no information about the first suit, because that he knows as well as you, and the only possible inference he can draw from this line of play is that you have absolutely nothing in your hand, and he must play a protective instead of an offensive game.

The "ought to have known" argument is spoilt by using it at wrong times. That there is much we ought to know and do not we should all cordially admit; but when a player deliberately plays false and then says

you ought to have known who had the missing card, he does more harm than good by his remarks. It is bad enough to have to play with men who habitually play false, but it is insult added to injury to be told "you ought to have known." All men at times play false cards, and occasionally it may be successfully done, but if the coup may be prevented from coming off by your partner, you must take this chance into consideration before playing with this double-edged tool. You cannot eat your cake and have it. You cannot deceive your adversaries without also deceiving your partner.

A quiet talk on the play of a hand is very instructive, and every Whist-player is glad to explain his reasons for the line of play he adopted, and glad also to have pointed out to him how he could have played to greater advantage and why he should have done so.

We have long since recommended players to give up talking altogether, not because talking is bad—we have stated the contrary—but because no one at the Whist table seems able to talk without getting into a passion. But if we cannot stop talking, do not let us have this foolish kind of talk, that we ought to have known, unless the talker is prepared to show how we should have known. Do not tell us we ought to have known when it is you, and you alone, who have prevented us from knowing. Find out a man who thus talks, and though he afterwards, and on other occasions, speaks in tones of silver, and with the wisdom of an angel, his talk is as nothing. We listen to the voice of the syren no longer, charm he ever so wisely. And the moment this sort of talk is introduced there is an end to any one pointing out the most glaring errors; the bad players no longer listen to the good, and

Whist, instead of advancing as it should advance, deteriorates in a marked degree. All suffer alike from the silly talk of one person, and that person alone was the cause of the original error.

We were playing lately when we ventured to point out to our partner that he ought not to have trumped a winning card. We wanted three tricks to win the game, and two to save the game. The best heart was led, and our partner had the thirteenth trump, and the rest of his hand consisted of losing clubs, of which he knew we had none. Our partner trumped, and seemed to think we were little short of daft to think he could do otherwise. A moment's reflection should have told him that if he won the trick the game was over. He might know nothing about the hearts, and still he is forced to pass the winning heart. To tell him this at the Whist table is as talking to the wind, and simply because he is so accustomed to be scolded for things that he cannot see. In this case it may be we could have convinced him he was wrong. The point is of every-day occurrence, and men go on day after day winning a trick when they ought to know that to win one trick means the loss of the game.

We have wondered at times at the perversity with which men will trump, and our wonder is only surpassed by the obstinacy with which others will go on passing winning cards when the other suits may be in their partner's hands.

We witnessed, some years ago, one of the most charming blunders it has ever fallen to our lot to see. A's hand consisted of five hearts and the thirteenth trump. Z, last player, had the two best hearts and the four long clubs. A led the heart, which Z won.

Problem—How now to lose four tricks? We saw this done, and the player of forty years' standing said to us, in all innocence, "I like to make a trick whilst I can."

There is no Whist law to prevent you chaffing your adversaries. Common courtesy requires Whist-players to behave as gentlemen, and it is no part of a gentleman's duty to hurt the feelings or destroy the pleasures of others. Conversation at Whist between the deals is, no doubt, proper, but between the deals you should say nothing without regarding the effect of your words on the others.

We often think a feeling of anger is aroused at Whist from a little inattention to the effects of the words uttered. Thus, we are playing with very bad luck; we have lost every rubber; we have had two "Yarboroughs" in one rubber, and we have just played a hand where by no possibility could we have got a trick. Our opponents win, and then complaisantly speak of their play, or, "I think we made the best of that, partner!" It seems very natural in cold blood, but the victim is not cold; he is excited, and not in the best of humour, and a very little of this sort of conversation will raise a blaze, when at another time such talk would be but the subject of laughter. It follows that you should be much more careful what you say to an angry man; and at Whist, when a man loses, however well he may command his temper, you are not by any means sure that he is not angry.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

WANT OF PERCEPTION—CONFIDENCE—TIME.

We were watching a game at Whist a few days ago, and we were struck with an answer that a player gave to the question—"Partner, why did you return my spade?" Answer: "You led spade, then why should I not return it?" "Surely, if you win third hand with an eight you must be leading up to great strength," was the modest reply, to which the culprit: "How do I know what you lead from?" Here we have an original lead of a small spade, won third hand by the eight (his highest of the suit), and returned, and the partner thinks he is a good player, and has played with success for forty years; he is quite satisfied that he played by rule, and up to this moment he cannot see that he did anything wrong. It is quite true the third player did not know what the leader had led from, nor could any one else tell, because either first player or second player must have played an irregular card. As a matter of fact, the second player had ace, queen, ten, and he ought to have put on the queen; but the remark as to not knowing of what the leader's hand consisted was beside the question, because it must be that the leader has two honours in the suit, and the second player two, and therefore to return a suit in which this position occurs is to place your partner under the greatest possible disadvantage. There is no help for it but to open your best suit, and abandon your partner's. In this case the player had an ace, queen, knave suit.

We have often commented on the fact that players do not reflect what their partner leads from, but, in addition to the inferences to be drawn from the card led, every player should be able to surmise something about the other two hands. Yet there are many men who think themselves Whist-players because they have mastered the leads; another set who think they are Whist-players, without any knowledge of the leads; whilst the same set who know the proper lead from any combination of the cards in their own hands cannot tell what it is their partners have led from by inference. Thus we see men lead correctly knave from king, queen, knave, three, two, who yet cannot understand that when their partner leads knave that he has led correctly, and that he has king, queen, and two others of the suit. If they have none of the suit, they will trump the knave, and tell you that it was the correct play to do so; first, because they could not assume that you had the king, queen, and then, to add to the enormity, they say they were so weak that they must trump, forgetting that if they are so weak that they cannot afford to pass the knave, they make the case more hopeless by preventing our suit from being cleared. The same player will tell you that if you had led the king you would have saved the game. Again, suppose that the third player does follow suit, and the question comes at the end of the hand: "Of what does my partner's hand consist?" They correctly count the king, queen to be in their partner's hand, but they will leave the two small cards of the suit unaccounted for.

There should, all through the hand, be mental questions asked and answered. What can this card be led

from? What can this man have? What is the object of this lead, or that? How constantly do we see men treat a suit led as a strong suit, when the lead is simply to our partner's discard, or a trump led to our partner's call. If, by the command of our partner we lead trumps, the same class of player will treat our hand as the strong hand, and proceed to force us. Young players looking on should endeavour to answer for themselves similar questions to those we have suggested, and failing to answer the question satisfactorily, they should ask the player for his reasons for doing this or that, and if the question be asked for information, they may rest assured they will obtain an answer. How knowest thou this? How did you know that So-and-so had so-and-so, or had not so-and-so? There is a reason for every lead, and no card should be played without some reason for it.

We see many city men play Whist. In the city they know the value of money, and the value of credit or confidence in another. Now, at Whist, good cards are cash, but next to good cards the most valuable commodity is credit or confidence. Play with a man in whom you have confidence, and you get more out of the cards than you do when you play with a man in whom you have no faith. The same men who in the city know the value of confidence, will not see that the same confidence is of equal value at Whist. In the city they may get rich by the aid of money, but they also may get rich without money by the aid of their own good name, which is credit. So, if we can get good cards, we win, and with bad cards we save a trick here and a trick there, save the game, and have another chance.

We get more out of the good cards by the aid of faith, and we get more out of bad cards, and this is money or money's worth. We play with a man who has no faith. We lead ace, queen; our partner, when the queen is led, has king and another; he will not put on the king, and, with a good trump hand, lead trumps; on the contrary, he will keep up the king and force us to lead the suit again, or change the suit, because, with the king held up with a bad player, we cannot assume that he has king and another left, whereas, with a good player, we are certain that he has king and another. It follows, therefore, that with a bad player we cannot lead trumps, whilst with a good player we can safely do so, and thus by credit, and credit only, we gain that most valuable element—time. We wish we could press this subject home.

Time is often of infinite importance at Whist. If we have to wait until we get in again before leading trumps, what chances there are of our losing the opportunity altogether, or not getting in until it is too late to be of any advantage. A cross ruff may get established. Our adversaries may get a discard that changes the whole feature of the game. The game fluctuates; its features change with every lead, and the bold stroke, justifiable at one moment, is an act of rashness at another. Probably nothing exhibits the value of time and confidence combined better than the case when your partner's original lead is to your strong suit; we win the trick and have good strength in trumps; if we have faith in our partner's lead, we can play trump instanter, but if we doubt him, we are obliged to return the lead to see if he has led from strength or weakness. This return has lost more games

than any other; and our partner will no doubt say, at the end of the hand, if you had led trumps we should have won the game, and he will probably be right, and deem it our bad play; and so it is. But what induced the bad play? Why, the lead of that wretched single queen the previous hand! But he will say, we lost nothing by that, which may be true; but the loss has come this hand instead of the last, and to lose the one is as bad as the other. He and many others will say the last hand has nothing to do with this. Each hand must be played on its own merits, which is of course true; but we are governed by what has gone before in estimating the probabilities of what will occur again, and the player who leads us a singleton cannot blot out the fact from our memory, and we cannot play with him as with a steadier player. The same player who finds fault with us for not trusting him will say, you must guide your play by your knowledge of the players, and vary the play with this knowledge, and they will say: oh, So-and-so can never win, he always plays straight.

We all lose at times by playing straight, but how much do these dark horses lose by these indirect crooked ways? There are now many of these players who say they led us a strengthening card, say a queen or a knave, and that was the best they could do for us. The queen certainly helps if it happens to be our suit, but, to our thinking, the knave is of very little use; indeed, it is an embarrassing card, except when we have ace, queen, or when the second player has the ace; and even in the latter case if the leader is known to open from such a suit, the ace is not put on. When men argue in favour of such a lead, they seem to leave

out of sight the fact that a knave or queen in their hands are very protective cards, and if the lead be an original lead then the odds are as two to one against the suit being your partner's. Again, if the knave is not covered, and we have ace and neither king nor queen, we cannot tell that the lead is from weakness, and we put on the ace, thus clearing our adversaries' suit right off. The queens and knaves singly guarded as protections to the suits are of much greater value in hand than led out. We infinitely prefer the long suits being led, however weak. We very often hear men say that with five trumps to the ten or nine, and with no trick in their hand, they cannot lead trump; it is too risky. We wish one of these would put in writing what it is they risk. We should like to see the case fairly argued. At present we can see nothing to argue about; the player can only go for his partner's hand. He cannot save the game alone, and with five trumps we want to do more than save the game. If your partner has no strength, what is the good of the trumps? Do you not do more good by leading them at every opportunity rather than by risking the sacrifice of your partner's good cards? Is it not better to find out your partner's suit, and then lead it, rather than lead at haphazard? They seem to think that with five trumps they can lead trump at any time, but they forget that to lead trump they must first get in. If they miss the opportunity of leading at first, the time and opportunity are lost—never to return.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

WHIST FALLACIES.

The history of Whist will be incomplete until some one has found out who introduced the different methods of play known to be unsound. The tenacity with which men cling to error is only to be equalled by the Whist-player who, from precept, example, or some fancy in the brain, has acquired an unsound mode of play. Our old friend who will put on a knave, having knave and another, second hand, is a simple example. Who taught him this? Who invented the move? Or do each of the players who follow this rule re-invent for themselves, and look upon themselves as the author of a remarkable discovery? No one ever defended the play. No one can show any benefit from it. Every one condemns it; yet we can only scotch the varmint. The player is scared, but ten minutes afterwards he still puts on knave. So with king and another, second hand. *Mogul* proved that it did not answer to put on king, but those players who began life by putting on king continue to do so. Whatever chance in life men have of reforming their ways and manners, the instances are rare when the reforms are effected at the Whist table. The crotchety player cannot be cured of his crotchets. The noisy and quarrelsome players remain noisy and quarrelsome to the end of the chapter. Three-fourths of the card-players of England believe, or play as if they believed, that a trick in trumps counts more at the end of a hand than a trick in a plain suit. Who taught this fallacy? and why does it continue to live? A

player originally leads ace, queen, of which his partner has none; partner having small trumps only, trumps the queen. He thinks he has made a trick, and triumphantly points to the fact that he has done so. It is true he has made a trick, but what an awful mess he has made of his partner's hand. Do players of this calibre reflect at all? Do they say to themselves, "Here are thirteen cards divided amongst three players"? The number in each hand is unknown, except that four at least are in the hand of the leader. The other nine are divided between the adversaries. Is it nothing at Whist to have a suit cleared in your partner's hand? Is not this advantage in itself worth a trick? Is a discard of no value? We do not think the majority of players reflect at all. They are continually looking for some kind of signal or guide-post. They are haunted by "Blue Peters." They see signals in every hand, and whenever a very senseless lead of trumps loses the game, they always assert that their partner signalled. A player who, on his partner's original lead of trumps, will persist in showing his suit before returning the trump, acts on a fallacy not now supported by authority. They say, "Oh, I had such a beautiful suit—king, queen, ten, three, two; I must first show my game." This means loss of time. The suit can be ascertained by the discard, but a partner who opens with a trump has taken the command of the game, and if you are playing with a second player—by which we mean all players, except those who will lead a singleton in trumps only because they have a singleton—the game originally pointed out should be followed. It is, of course, useless to speak of the singleton as a popular fallacy. The

founder of this lead is not known; but his followers are, and we suppose always will be, a numerous class. If we put this down as a fallacy, we must say that it is an equal fallacy to suppose that you are to play with all men in the same manner. You must recognise the idiosyncracies of the players. Thus, if you have a partner who leads from singletons, and that suit turns out to be your own, you would commit an act of folly to lead trumps where, with an ordinary player, you would be bound to lead trumps. The adversaries should do the like. If the fourth player happens to be led up to in his suit, and he can tell that the lead is for a ruff, he can with more boldness lead trumps.

It is a popular fallacy that muffs always win at Whist. That bad players hold better cards than good players. No doubt this is believed by many. It makes an impression when the bad players win, because we expect the good players to win, and are not surprised when they do so. It is only in a limited number of hands that skill can tell; some hands win by themselves. The bad players lose a trick here and there, and they think that is the whole difference between the good and bad players, ignoring altogether the judgment required in conducting a hand. It is a popular fallacy that by inattention, bad players can afford to lose trick after trick and yet win, and sometimes they can, but no sane man would lose a trick on purpose. Every trick won takes you on to your goal, and a trick lost takes your adversaries along. The difference in a race of this kind should be marked.

It is a popular error when you sit down to Whist that you have given your partner the right to scold and

quarrel with you, and that you have acquired a right to scold and quarrel with him; and it is a popular error to suppose that by the free exercise of this right the play gets better, and you and your partner are enjoying yourselves to the utmost. These errors we have frequently pointed out, but we occasionally still see the power enforced on the most unoffending of men who play according to their lights, and for their own money, and who offend only from want of skill. Few attempt to acquire skill at Whist, and we are not surprised they do not do so, when we know how few possess the necessary ability to apply their knowledge when it is acquired. Good, bad, and indifferent players alike enjoy their rubber, provided only that each man plays as he pleases. The good players remember the cards better than bad players. They conduct the game with better judgment. They read the hand more quickly than the bad players. They ascertain at once who is playing a strong and who a weak game, and they act accordingly. There is no worse fault than to play a strong game with weak cards, or a weak game with a strong hand. The strong player always has the score distinct in his mind, and plays accordingly. He does not play for two tricks when one will do. He knows when to try for game and when to save game. His judgment as to leading trumps is of immense value, even in these days of signals. In all these points the good players and bad players may be wrong; it is only that the good players make less mistakes than the bad. Bad play often tells when good play fails, and this is one of the causes why the bad players think themselves the equals of the good, and it is for many that they have

this belief. How many really bad players enjoy their rubber? They have one of the popular fallacies always in their heads. They believe that in the long run cards equalise themselves. They may do so, but it is not our experience, and the life of man is not sufficiently long to test all the vagaries of chance.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

RETURNING ADVERSARIES' LEADS.

It has been demonstrated that the lead at Whist is an advantage. There are some exceptions to this, as to all general rules. The object of the leader is to bring in a long suit; to make the small cards of greater value than intrinsically they possess. This object is frustrated if the leader has not four trumps, or three trumps with a card or cards of re-entry, or unless he finds his partner with strength in trumps. To bring in a long suit, not headed by ace, king, it is necessary that it should be played twice or three times, and if leader and his partner play this suit whenever they get in, and the right-hand adversary does the same, there are more chances of establishing the suit than if they are left to their unaided efforts. This should be as easily demonstrated as a problem of Euclid. We are led to make this remark, because we so constantly see the original lead returned by the fourth player. At the end of the hand this may not only often be forced play, but good play, for if the original leader discontinues his suit he probably has a reason for his

action, and that reason may be that he has the major tenace.

What may be very good play at the end, may be, and we think generally is, bad play at the beginning. Supposing the fourth player in the first round wins the trick; what is his position? He is now original player, with twelve cards. Additional knowledge. The suit of the player to the left known. Further, that the original leader has not sufficient strength to lead trumps. From our observation it seems a species of mania to return the original lead. And of what does the fourth player's hand usually consist? either one only of the suit left, when the player's presumed reason is to get a ruff, and very often when a single force is most injurious to his hand; or he has three of the suit left, including the second best.

We fail to see much benefit from either of these leads. Suppose, in the first case, that the fourth player had originally ace, two. He wins with the ace, and returns the two. Would the same player originally have led ace, two? because, if not, we cannot see why he should now act on a different principle. If it be sound play to return the two, it would seem sound play originally to lead the ace, two, as our fathers did. In the other case, holding the second best, and two or three left of the suit, and we return it, the second player may finesse, which would depend on his strength in trumps; in which event, we have run the risk of having our second best killed (when we have three only) when it was otherwise absolutely safe, and when he has four, including the second best; in the fourth round it must be trumped. The least harm is done in the last case. Suppose, however, that the

original player led from five, have we not done the very thing he desired? By himself he cannot bring in the suit as against you, and his whole object is frustrated. The rule of the game is to protect your adversaries' suit, a rule that we believe to be perfectly sound, and this rule is set at naught.

We almost wish that "Cavendish" would, in his next edition, insert a rule, that you should always return your adversaries' suit; then, at any rate, the non-book player would at once disregard it, because it was a rule. The player who persistently returns the suit is soon known, and the principle on which he proceeds is known also. If the original player's partner gets in later on, and returns his partner's suit, as third player, original leader can seldom finesse; at any rate, not so often or with so much safety as he can against the player who returns the suit because he has strength. It may be also that when the player returns the two (the first example) his partner may have sufficient strength to protect the suit, and that strength may be destroyed. In our judgment, there can be but few instances where the return lead is forced, and returning the suit seems to us more often wrong than right. The players of this school can never have recognised the value of time, or the difficulty of getting the lead into their own hands.

To establish a suit and get out trumps is often a long and difficult operation. Why relieve your adversary of any portion of these difficulties? There are few wise men who make an effort to produce that which, in the order of events, will come about by leaving things alone. In the case stated the original leader may get in, and his partner may get in; either

of these will continue the original suit, and the event that you desire comes without any effort. This is as regards the two suit, and the chance of the trump, but if you return the suit, one adversary, if not both, will know what you are driving at. And what are you doing for your partner? Probably you will make him play for a wretched ruff, rather than open his best suit, the opening of which may give you the key to the game.

There are hands, of course, in which it is safest and best to return the adversaries' suit; thus, with great weakness in every suit, and you have the second and third best of the suit first led, it is safer to return that suit rather than open a new suit, but what we desire to impress is that it is not advisable to play your adversaries' game when you could play a game of your own.

If we are dissatisfied because of the persistent return of an adversaries' suit it must not be supposed that we are not also sometimes disgusted at our partner for not returning our own. If the one is a mania, the other is an epidemic. No partner of ours, with strength and a knowledge of our suit, will ever lead trump. They must forsooth attempt to establish a second suit, believing, we hope, that the lead and the direction of the hand is always at their disposal.

Amongst the common faults of players is the return of a weak lead. He who leads from weakness does so, either because he has reason to believe that suit is his partner's, or the suit is a forced lead. If the third player has not sufficient strength to bring in the suit (by himself), it is perfectly certain that his partner cannot help him, and the suit must be changed. Yet we see players treating this lead as one that they are

bound to return, and they always appear surprised that their partner has nothing in the suit.

Late in the hand players of intelligence should know the reasons that influence their partner, even though the card led does not enlighten them. They seem to think they have done their duty, and they triumphantly answer anyone who asks, "How could you return that spade? I led the nine, covered with the knave. It must be ruin." "Why, you led it." But again they say, "I returned it because I could not open from a suit headed by a nine," quite regardless of the fact that in many games the only chance of saving or winning lies in each partner leading the weak suit for the other to finesse, for if the finesse does not come off, the game is gone. This, of course, is not at the beginning of the game, but when trumps are out, or strength declared against you. It is useless attempting this with players who read books simply to misunderstand them, or who play by rote without any thought or intelligence.

We are always derided as a book player, but we saw a player recently play, as he declares, by book (who hates and detests all books, and who revels in all kinds of eccentricities)—committing the most ludicrous blunders that we ever remember. In one case the player to his right originally led the trump two, third hand put on king, fourth ace; later on, the original trump-player was forced, and he trumped with the five. There was a good deal of trumping, on the part of the second and fourth players; when the original trump-player got in again there were only two cards left in each hand; he had two trumps, the seven and knave. Our book hater had the queen,

ten. He wanted two tricks to make the game, and he put on the queen. He could not place two trumps (the only two in besides his own) in the original leader's hand although he led originally the two. The other case was worse, all the trumps were out, he had ace, queen in one suit, and four winning cards in another; he put on the queen, wanting five tricks for game, and for the first time in his life he played, as he thinks, by book. We should like to see the book that ever said anything so ridiculous; but we can assure our friend that there is nothing of the sort in existence.

The rules of play as to leading and playing are laid down to get the largest number of tricks. These rules are not always sound, as we hope some day to demonstrate, but that is their object, and in the main they are correct. The rule, if so it can be called, as to the finesse of ace, queen, or any other finesse, is to obtain two tricks instead of one, but who out of Bedlam would dream of sacrificing five tricks for the bare chance of making six when five only are wanted.

Does any one play for more than certainty? We play to win the game, and not to lose it. Such play has nothing to do with books. It is pure inattention or want of observation, and the book is only spoken of as a cover for weakness or folly.

Once more may we ask our players to hold up their cards. The player who holds his cards in a slanting direction, with the tops towards his partner, places every opponent in a most uncomfortable position. There are certain finesses forced to save or win the game, and it is very disagreable to make a deep finesse which comes off when the finessor has had an opportunity of seeing the last player's hand. This difficulty

can be avoided by holding your cards upright, or with the tops slightly inclined towards yourself.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

GENIUS—THE DISCARD.

It is said that a young barrister always expects to become Lord Chancellor. Ambition may bring about the desired result. The Chancellorship does not fall to the lot of any one who does not try for it, and few in this life excel by accident alone. It may be that when a man begins to play Whist he hopes to attain the proficiency of Deschapelles, and to attain that end qualifications of a very high order are necessary. Whist-players have been indulged, *ad nauseam*, with the number of high qualities they possess. Yet how few there are who exhibit any kind of genius, and even in those cases where the players possess genius, how they fritter away their advantages! Genius is the grandest gift of man, and yet how often is the genius left behind in the race, whilst the man of more moderate powers keeps plodding on to the front.

We have never met but two Whist geniuses, and we guess one of these has lost more rubbers than any man alive. The player who is always playing for pretty things at Whist is certain to come to grief. We cannot all have genius, but we can all have attention; at least, if we cannot attend to the hand, and concentrate our thoughts for five minutes on the play, it is tolerably certain that such an one can never be a Whist-player. Yet there are few amongst us who realise

the fact that, to attend conscientiously to the business before us requires an effort; and nine players out of ten never try their powers. Men, as a rule, seem to play as if they were in a dream; they never grasp the subject so as to be the master of the situation when the opportunity offers; they do not strike when the iron is hot; or, if they strike, they do so with such feeble strokes that no spark is emitted, and their puny efforts are as nought.

The energetic player succeeds at Whist, without much knowledge of the subject, where the weaker player, with more knowledge, so often fails. We do not advocate a very dashing game, although we believe a little more dash would often succeed. There are some who are always playing a desperate game when there is no occasion for so doing, but the players generally are too fond of retaining their trumps. They rely on the call, and they consider the fact that you have not called sufficient justification for not leading trump, and this is the cause, we believe, of the unjustifiable calls we so frequently see. We have seen men call without a trump, and they say, "Well, if I did not, I know my partner would never lead trumps." But players should remember that the existence of the signal in no way does away with their responsibility, or their judgment, in leading trumps. Each player must decide for himself the time and opportunity for leading trumps, and if he does not know when to lead trump then he knows nothing of Whist. It is often a difficult question to decide, but difficulties should not prevent a man from attempting to solve the problem. It is rank cowardice to get out of the difficulty by shirking it altogether, and the reliance on that weak

and unhealthy reed, the "Blue Peter," is destroying the independent judgment that is essential for decent Whist-play. There seems a want of courage—a moral cowardice about our Whist-players—that we cannot explain by any other theory.

Then, again, how unobservantly do men play. Take the case of the discard. The first discard is probably the key to the game. A, the strong player, is leading out trumps, and he gets them all out, and has the lead; nine times out of ten he will have forgotten his partner's first discard, and play on the assumption that his last discard was the first, and so certain is this to come about, that we believe, with some players, it is best to endeavour to calculate how many discards we shall get, and let the last discard be our weakest suit.

Of course, if we cannot get players to watch the first discard, it is obvious we cannot expect them to watch the discard of the adversaries. Nor, *a fortiori*, can we expect them to inquire whether the discard is made in consequence of our partner's or our adversaries' strength. When our partner is the strong player there can be little or no difficulty about our first discard. We show (that is, we should show, if our partner had eyes to see), which is our weakest suit, and we tell him, if ears could hear, *not* to lead that suit. We unguard a king rather than mislead him; and, having told him the suit we do not want led, we ask him to reflect, and judge for himself which of the other two suits we do want. A moment's thought will generally tell this, but if we cannot make men notice with their eyes the first information we give, how can we hope to induce them to reason when the groundwork of the proposition is absent from their consideration?

But, given the fact that we have a partner who will recollect our first discard, do they attempt to reason why the discard is made? It always seems to us that they play as blindly now as if they did not see. Players do not lay down any given card without a reason for so doing, and the other players must try to fathom this reason. Thus, when our partner is playing a strong game, we endeavour to help him, and try to play a strong game also; and with that object, we try to bring in a long suit. But if our adversaries play a strong game, we are at once bound to play on the defensive. We must keep our kings guarded. We must keep our queens doubly guarded. We must, if we have four of our adversaries' suit to the nine or ten, keep this suit intact. How often have we seen knave led won with the ace; trumps led, and got out; an adversary with four of the original lead to a nine or ten throws one of these away, and loses the game; or, by playing properly and carefully, prevents all this suit being brought in after the king and queen are made.

It is, therefore, clear that the discard, which is right in one case, is wrong in the other, and the player watching the discard must draw a different inference from the one and the other. In this, as in other Whist points, he must reason, and if he cannot reason, he cannot play Whist. Whist and reason are convertible terms. That there are a large number of players who think they play Whist, and do not reason, it is too true; but we say that such play may be Bumble-puppy, or some other game—it certainly is not Whist.

There are players who never reason, and some of these win. These gentlemen do not, as a rule, look upon Whist as a game of skill. They treat it as pure

chance, and they fail to see that a good player often makes more out of the cards than they do; and, as lookers-on, they complacently state that they should not have lost that game. In other words, when they play, they consider that they never lose a trick, but that the better players often do so by over-refining. There is some truth in all propositions of this description. The good player loses by over-refining, but a good player seldom refines, except when there is some considerable object to be gained; and the bad critic often finds fault when the course taken by the good player was the only one possible to save or win the game.

But granted that the good player makes mistakes, and all do, the question arises who makes the most mistakes, the good player or the bad? Because at Whist it is the player who makes the least mistakes who wins, so far as skill as against luck tells. The bad player sees the mote in his neighbour's eye. He might, with advantage, pluck out the beam which is in his own. We do not think bad players ever realise that it is easy to play with good cards, and very difficult to play with bad cards. There are, of course, degrees of skill in the conduct of both hands; but with a good roaring hand, when four cards are obtained, and where five could have been got, the bad player thinks he has done well, and the good player sees that he has done ill.

Some of those players, who do not attach any force to reason, allege that they play by instinct. No doubt instinct is a very valuable quality, if you have it, and some players certainly think they have this quality, in the same way that a pointer or setter has it. Whether

dogs have reasoning powers as well as instinct cannot very well be discussed here, but we certainly lean to the belief that the retriever reasons. Be this as it may, as instinct in a Whist or Piquet-player cannot be explained or governed by any known laws, and we do not know how much of this quality any man possesses, we prefer to be guided by what every man has, if he chooses to use his faculties: the power to observe; the power to draw inferences; the power to reason from the play of a given card, and to make a reasonable deduction from the absence of any cards.

Piquet-players are often supposed to play by instinct. There are, of course, positions when it is pure chance which of two suits to go for, and we prefer to call that chance, rather than instinct, and we certainly should not like to back the man who played by instinct when reason would guide him.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

LUCK.

The item, luck, possesses great attractions for the card player, and we may dispel some illusions if we can ascertain what luck is in the eyes of the public. The multitude (including all young Whist-players) believe that luck comes to us, at some time or other, in equal proportions, and that if they lose one day they win back their losses the next; or if they lose one rubber, they will win the next; or if they do not go quite to this extent, they believe that the balance of profit and loss comes equal at the end of the year. These are illusions that experience dispels.

A man may play for months together and only win once in a dozen times. He may only win once in twenty or any other number of times that the imagination may fix upon; but that a man may play and win, on an average, once in twelve times only for eight months—say two hundred sittings—we can assert from our own personal knowledge, and the fact remains that we may play for eight months more and the same result may come about. In other words, the losses for the last eight months have nothing to do with the profit or loss for the ensuing eight months; and because we have played with this ill-luck in the past, we have no more or less immunity from loss than if we had played and won every time for the last eight months. The past has no effect on the future. In every rubber the chances are equal, exactly in the same way as in tossing up an evenly-balanced coin the head is as likely to come upwards as the tail, notwithstanding that one or the other has turned up consecutively twenty times. But there are various kinds of luck in an intricate game like Whist, which do not occur in tossing. There are, say, eight players, and in making up the table you may get into a bad table or a good table. In cutting for partners you may get the best or the worst partner. You may lose the deal. You may choose the right or the wrong cards. Your partner, if a good player, may play ill, and lose the game; or, being a bad player, may play well or ill, and win or lose the game. You or your partner may have at starting two equally good suits, each of apparent equal value. Open with the one, and you win, and with the other, you lose; and a bad partner may not finesse, and lose; or he may make a finesse

utterly indefensible, and win by it. Either player may misconduct the hand, and lose the game. One may lose by an oversight—by dropping a wrong card, and so on.

You may have a partner who is ordinarily trustworthy, who may forget that a card led is a thirteenth card, or, being a small card, may forget that it is the best; or you may have a suit with all the best but one, which is against you, and you lead the suit to get it cleared, and your partner not understanding your design, will trump, and leave the best of the suit still against you; or, having the whole of a suit except the best, your partner will hold up the king card of that suit. You may lose when you are playing for a high stake, and win when playing for a small stake, and so on *ad infinitum*. One player suffers much more for a mistake than another. The lucky man may revoke and win the rubber notwithstanding, whereas the unlucky player cannot lose a trick without losing irretrievably. Nay, how often do we see a good player miss a trick, and from that moment the cards appear to desert him, and he can never recover himself. Had he played correctly, and won that particular trick, the whole cards might have been different for the rest of the day. Yet other men make the greatest mistakes, and go on winning as if nothing had happened. One man may steal a horse, whilst another man will be hanged for looking over the hedge.

When the unlucky man has a good hand his partner has nothing. The two hands never seem to fit. The cards not in his own or his partner's hands are all on the wrong side. A is killed by B, whilst C is killed by D; so that the position of the cards—one of the

most important matters in the game—is a pure question of luck or chance. Then, after a series of misfortunes, having reached the point of four, there comes a hand sufficient to make a game, and the element luck comes in again. The goddess may come at the right time, or only to tantalize you, or to make you lose more by inducing you to lay the odds after winning the first game. We may get to the score of four, and have two by honours, and lose the odd trick two or three times, and when we are at three the honours will not come to help us out. It may have been luck in either of these cases, whether we were at the score of three or four. The health of yourself or partner may seriously affect the result. For yourself, you ought to know whether you are in a fit state to play; but of your partner's health, of his cares and troubles, and whether he will be thinking of other speculations—of stocks and shares, business or pleasure, away from the table—you have no means of judging, and no power to control even if the event were patent to your eyes.

The variety of hands that can be held are infinite. It is useless to speak of a million, because a million is an incomprehensible number; but we know that some men can hold trump and court cards to such an extent as to be sickening, whilst others appear to get neither trumps nor court cards. Some men who play according to rule, lead, say, from five trumps, and find out that by any other lead they must have won the game; or, for some happy cause, they lead an irregular card and come to grief; or they play a false card and come to destruction; whilst others play false cards, or lead irregular cards, and find they have done good rather than harm. It is certainly very seldom that we play

a false card, but we scarcely remember an instance where we have done so and have not suffered by it, and we certainly never did so play without believing that we had a justification for so playing. Yet, daily, we see others play false cards without rhyme or reason, and sometimes winning, or seldom losing, by their cleverness, and this at a table where they are suspected and we are not.

There is another form of luck, which is really a matter of judgment, as, indeed, many of these things are. You have the king card of your adversary's suit. It is a very important question, and one which must be treated on its merits every hand, whether to win the single trick, and run the risk of letting in your adversary's suit, or to protect the suit and never make the trick. It is of common occurrence to see a player at one time scolded for failing to make the single trick, and at another for being such an ass as to let in the suit. Every man must decide for himself; but it is often chance that influences the play, and it is certainly wrong to scold a player for deciding incorrectly, judging not by what he knew, but by the result. Of the many difficulties that occur at Whist, there are few that have caused us more anxiety than this very question, and, having decided (as in all difficult matters we often must decide) wrong, it is rather hard that our thought should not only have been expended in vain, but that, having done our best, we are scolded in the bargain. We acknowledge that the wrong decision often arises from an imperfect analysis, or from want of sufficient accuracy of observation—in other words, want of attention—but the result is the same, from whatever cause.

At some time or other we have all had instilled into our minds that some good player has played with such skill, that for a series of years he has made a steady income out of Whist. This may be as (it ought to be) true, but years there must have been when such players, in spite of their skill, have not only not won, but have lost largely; and we venture to think that if these losses could be deducted from the previous gain, together with the expenses of the cards, there is no such steady winning arising from skill alone as is generally imagined. Skill and luck may carry the day, but skill alone, except on the assumption of equal cards (which we believe seldom exists), will not give a profit. Skill against bad cards saves games, and although *pro tanto* saving and winning are closely allied, they are not equally satisfactory.

"Cam," "Cavendish," and "J. C." have each been credited with winning for a series of years, but we are sure that each of these have had years in which, on the balance, they have lost a large number of points. We believe we could point out a player as inferior to those we have named as chalk is to cheese, who for ten years or more was invariably a winner, and it is this item, luck, alone that carried him through. Strangely enough, it is the men who habitually win that are the most positive that such a thing as luck does not exist, and they laugh at the idea of any one believing to the contrary. Can they explain how a bad player may win for ten years, playing against men of superior skill to their own? If men of little skill constantly win, can they explain why they win, unless this element, luck, aids them with better cards than their neighbours?

We believe skill is much overrated in a pecuniary point of view, by all our good players. They see, play, tell, and, because they win a trick occasionally, and save a trick occasionally, they think (and reason appears to be on their side) that this skill must tell just as a 66th or 33rd in favour of the tables at Baden or Homburg is sufficient to win. Well, at Whist, a 33rd (and a good player has a 33rd and more) ought to be sufficient; but we venture to think that it does nothing of the kind. Theory says it ought; practice says it does not.

There are many people that believe a certain income is to be derived from Whist. We have on record men that eked out their income by this means. They succeeded for a series of years; but the time came when they had their season of adversity, and their winnings melted like snow before the sun, and the time comes, sooner or later, to all players, good or bad—the season of ill-luck—when all the skill of Deschapelles cannot prevent a loss.

WHIST COWARDS.

If we were a Whist schoolmaster, which Heaven forbid, what attribute should we most desire our pupil to possess? We were about to answer—pluck; but if that were our reply, some wretched critic would immediately suggest sheep's-head as an appropriate adjunct; and the latter, we know from sad experience, is any-

thing but a desirable appendage. A coward at Whist is, however, a great nuisance, and a certain loser. Some would answer—caution; a retentive memory, or powers of observation; others, ingenuity or strategy; we elect as the true answer—honesty.

When we began to think about honesty, other than professional, our knowledge seemed to be summed up in two copy-book maxims, "Honesty is the best policy," and its opposite, "Cheating never thrives." Our first intention was to preach on these subjects; but on reflection we were inclined to doubt whether these maxims were true. Do cheats never thrive? on the contrary, we know cheating does thrive. It is not the cheating that does not thrive, but the being found out; whereas, as regards honesty, it takes nearly a lifetime to convince the public that you possess this quality, and it only answers when they find this out. Does not the man who artistically avoids the Adulteration Act at first carry off all the trade from his more honest opponent? and it is only when the cheat is found out that the honest man succeeds.

Then again, if cheating never thrives, why should we object to play against a cheat? nothing could be more pleasant than always to win. And if a cheat never succeeds, what an ass he must be to cheat at all; and as to honesty being the best policy, for whom is it the best policy, for the buyer or seller?

Locke lays it down as a principle that right and wrong, honest and dishonest, are defined only by laws and not by nature. This appears a very admirable maxim; but, like all other maxims, will not bear too particular application. We don't know whether Locke was a Whist-player, but the principle he lays down

appears admirably adapted for deciding many knotty points of the game.

To work out the maxim; Chess or Draughts in law may be played on Sundays, but Backgammon, Hazard, and other games played with dice are illegal; therefore, according to our philosopher, the one is right, the other wrong; the one is honest, the other dishonest. Or more ridiculous still, billiards is lawful when played at home, but unlawful at a licensed house.

Nor do we mean by honest, that if you are able to do it, you may cut a king at Ecarté; or at Whist that you may claim the odd trick or honours when you have not got them; or mark three when you are only two; or claim to have won two games when you have not done so; or pay a point short to your opponent; or receive a point too much; or pay the short odds when you have lost the long; or look over your adversaries' hands and play accordingly. We suspect none of these things, and this is not the kind of honesty we mean.

On consideration, we found honesty was a word with a great many meanings; and, referring to our dictionary, we found the definition:—"upright, just, frank, sincere"; we certainly hope our pupil possesses all these qualifications, but none of these express our meaning. The honesty we refer to is the opposite qualification to false; we mean that as in the ordinary affairs of life, we like a man who never lies with his tongue; so at Whist he should never lie with his cards; that is, for no temporary triumph should he ever tell with his cards what he would not tell with his tongue; *e.g.*, leading from king, knave, ten, if he lead the knave he tells me in Whist language he has not the king. If

he spoke with his tongue, he has lied—and the lie is just as bad speaking with one instrument as another. It is no answer to say there is no difference between the knave and the ten; in one country it may be honest and good play to lead the knave, and in another the ten; if the knave be the recognised lead in another country it is then dishonest to lead the ten.

To be honest appears to be the most difficult achievement for a young player, but it appears worse still for an old player, accustomed to the old style, and who has acquired sufficient knowledge of the modern school to see in his cooler moments the advantages of the new system, and who, nevertheless, after a few rubbers, relapses into the dishonest system. Honesty is the only true foundation for confidence. Whist is a game in which one man necessarily plays in partnership with another; and what is the use of a partnership without confidence? If a man cheats his partner out of sixpence, does he not thereby forfeit all claims to confidence? And how much longer would this rankle in the partner's mind, than years of previous integrity. So in Whist, deceive your partner once, and for how long will he recollect the occurrence, and at a critical moment when he must play for your cards, how can he possibly calculate on what you have got? How many rubbers are lost by reason of this want of confidence arising from a false card having been played in a previous game. And the worst of it is, you can't tell your partner you played the wrong card, because you have no faith in him. We wish to make it plain that the first thing for a young player to do is to obtain the confidence of those with whom he plays, and this he

can only do by playing honestly. Always remember that confidence is a plant of slow growth.

HESITATION ON "THE BLUE PETER."

If a player habitually hesitates when commencing a "Blue Peter," we should, in Whist law, consider such conduct dishonourable, notwithstanding his play in other respects was unexceptionable. If he really cannot help hesitating, he should give up Whist, or, at any rate, "Blue Petering," until he can. He may be a perfectly honourable and straightforward man, but his Whist play cannot be so considered until he conquers this habit.—ANON.

ECCENTRIC PLAY.

Eccentricity in play seems the order of the day. Leads invented by our forefathers and abandoned, are revived with fatal effect to regularity and order. Rules recognised as sound are ignored, and the game has become something in the nature of brag—a game at which, regardless of the strength of the cards, a player occasionally wins. To impose upon your adversaries is perfectly fair and justifiable, but at Whist we can only occasionally so impose without detriment to our partner and therefore to ourselves. If a player chooses to start an original lead from a five and a four, and if he leads

the four, we are not aware that this is an offence criminally punishable by English law; if he does so and wins we cannot help it. And if he loses he cannot complain. If his partner suffers he should remember that he is not playing Whist on a particular system, but one in which the combination of two hands is by one of the players ignored. With such a partner we must play our own hand in our own way according to its strength or weakness. Whilst we are blind we must play like blind men. Only the player who makes us blind should not scold us for being blind, and he ought not to be surprised if one of the opponents is more wide awake than his partner. If we could play in such a way that we could tell our partner what we wanted, and at the same time deceive our adversaries, we should have arrived at our ideal of what would be perfect Whist; but then these inventors should perfect their system before practising at our expense. The deceptive system once introduced knows no bounds. The disease broke out in a mild form when the county player's second hand habitually played the king, having king, queen only. This was carrying out Mathews' idea of playing dark in your adversaries' suit, and playing openly in your own and your partner's suit. So far it was comprehensible, and if it could be kept in bounds in this way there would be little to say against it. Personally we never approved of this playing unless we were masters of the situation. We have so often seen loss ensue from keeping a good partner uninformed as to the position of the second best card of a suit that we never employ the *ruse* except with a very inattentive player. But it is obvious that if we once admit the exception there are many other opportunities

of extending the system. Given, however, the fact, that each player will go on his system, we have more than ever to deal with and study the idiosyncrasies of our partners. It is not Whist that we are to play, but Whist-players; exactly the same as at Brag or Poker. The man who will brag against one player with success would be a madman to brag against another. This one will see your hand, no matter what you bet, while a second will give in unless he has overwhelming cards and with a great chance in favour of his winning. If we play with men who habitually deceive, and we open with a suit of ace, king, three, two, and on the first round the last player drops the queen, it is quite possible that he may have the knave, or he may be signalling. Some people are never happy unless they signal. The weak player changes his suit. The adversary has practised a successful *ruse*, and he gets his reward in having another suit opened, or, with a very rash player, a trump. A good player may be known from a bad one the moment he is afraid to force his adversaries. It is moral cowardice in some, it is stinginess in another, but what are we to say of the man who now leads trumps? If it be right to lead trumps now, surely it was right to do so before leading the king. We should like for our fortune one-fourth of all the money that is lost by not sticking to the rule to force the strong hand. The cantankerous player will argue that he should have forced the strong hand had he known it, but that he did not know which was the strong hand. This is quite true. We have not much certainty at Whist. We used to think the ace of trumps a tolerably safe card, but last year we saw the ace dropped under the table to reappear at the last after the revokes had been made; and

although we suppose the ace did technically make a trick, we cannot say it counted for much. We must play on some sort of doctrine of probabilities, and we should generally assume that a player who has one only of a given suit would have a larger number of some other suit to make up for it; but having regard for the modern mania, we should be inclined to back the double event — 1st, that the player has the knave; 2nd, that he is signalling against the fact that the queen is alone. The next little fortune that we covet is a trifling share of the loss sustained by passing winning cards. It is a work of supererogation to write on this subject, because if the players' pockets will not tell them that this is a losing game, nothing that we can say will make them change their tactics. A third little fortune would accrue to us if we could legally acquire a share of the loss of those players who play for pretty things —those little coups that are so often tried and so seldom come off. To pass a king with an ace in your hand is the simplest form of this system. It is not only simplicity itself, but it is the one that seems most likely to come off. But the largest fortune we expect to get is from that class of players who ignore the element time. We once witnessed one of our great players refuse a force of his partner. He signalled; got in. Did not lead trumps as usual, and, as luck would have it, he won the game, because his partner had four trumps and two honours. On reflection, we daresay he would admit that this is not Whist, but at the moment he replied, "What more do you want? Is not that game?" Quite true. When we have great strength and our partner has also, it does not require very great genius to win. A player of less experience would do

as well. It is like Mr. Merry when he let his horse run for the Grand Prix at Paris on a Sunday, he replied to his Scotch constituents that his only justification was that the horse won, and this is all we can say of this play—the cards won, but no thanks to the great player.

We conceive that the fortune we shall acquire by these means will be sufficient to reclaim those numerous young men who are now walking barefooted on the Continent because they would not lead from five trumps.

GOOD HUMOUR.

Good humour is not appreciated at its worth. We know a quarrelsome man is a nuisance, because he makes every one uncomfortable; but we seldom recollect that the good-humoured man possesses the opposite qualifications, and that he makes us all happy. Neither scarlatina nor measles are so catching as good humour. Laughter is infectious, but how can you cause laughter without good humour? The good-humoured man is never very clever, never a hero; there is nothing grand about him; in his presence you feel either his equal or a shade his superior; he is a better listener than talker, but his talk is kind talk, never bitter or sarcastic—any absent person might safely hear all he said about them, and they would feel complimented thereby. In his presence you feel at your ease. If the table be silent he speaks at the right time; if you speak he listens with sympathy and attention; if you make a joke he will smile, notwithstanding it is a

Joe Miller, and he has heard it half a dozen times before.

We have endeavoured to describe the species because good-humoured men are rare and there are no specimens at the British Museum.

It may be, reader, that you are a good-natured man. We trust you are; but if not, would it not be worth an effort to try to become one of this species? It is not the most difficult object to attain; it is an acquired habit. Good-natured men are not so born; children are brought into the world some of them with bad, others with worse tempers, but we deny that any baby was ever born without a temper which did not show itself in an unmistakable manner within the first eighteen months of its existence. The prodigy may exist, but it is not one of ours, or one that we ever saw. You, dear lady, have doubtless a child perfect in this respect—all your children are perfect—pray, therefore, don't spoil them, but introduce the dear creatures to the world as "good-humoured" men and women, and they will thus add happiness to the human race.

A dinner of herbs, with good humour, is a meal that kings cannot command; a dinner consisting of all the delicacies of the season, with a surly companion, would turn the stomach of the greatest epicure.

All the miseries of life, the ills that flesh is heir to, can be cheerfully borne provided that you, or some one about you, has this most estimable quality, and though you possess the health and strength of Hercules, though you have riches in abundance, a good wife, and every comfort that man can desire or deserve, if you have not good humour, what matters?—miserable wretch that you are! Happiness is within your

grasp and you will not stretch out your hand to take it; the leprosy is upon you and you will not drink one glass of pure water to cure you. If we asked you to do some great thing to accomplish this object, would you not do it?—but because we ask you to be good-humoured, to be happy yourself and promote the happiness of others, this is too much! But, what on earth has all this to do with Whist? My dear sir, wait a bit! You don't happen to know anything, perhaps, of the miseries of making up a certain quantity of "copy," and that, if the writer failed to make his full quantity of bricks he would have to undergo certain pains and penalties too horrible to relate. This might not be fatal to your happiness, but who is to feed our starving wife and twenty-seven little ones? (We like to be particular about numbers.) You little know the salary drawn for these hints; perhaps, if you did, you would read them more attentively, and lay the precept to heart that we wish to inculcate. Be good-humoured. If you are angry about such a trifle as this you have not succeeded in your first experiment. We try your patience! We try it on purpose to see if you really are determined to give up that dreadful temper of yours and change your ways. You probably have in your acquaintance one or more Whist-players. Perhaps you are a Whist-player yourself. We will not speak of you but of your friends. It is much more pleasant to speak of them behind their backs when you speak kindly of them. Are they not all good-natured men? Do you ever see either of them angry, speak crossly to their partners, look savagely, or anything of that sort? If in the heat of the moment one of these good-natured players happens

to speak a little sharply, see how kind and meek and forgiving is the friend thus addressed. Perhaps he has Pope's lines in his head at this very moment:—

> "At every trifle scorn to take offence,
> That always shows great pride or little sense.
> Those heads as stomachs are not sure the best,
> Which nauseate all and nothing can digest."

It has fallen to our lot in life to meet many bad-tempered players. We confess, to our shame and disgrace, we are bad-tempered ourselves. We have met men who knew not the rules of the game, and were always trying to punish some one else for an imaginary crime, or finding out an imaginary penalty for a real offence. Some are angry when they lose; others because they think they have lost by a particular line of play. Many there are who judge by results, and although you prove to demonstration that you played correctly, and that if you had played differently not only would it have been bad play but the result would have been the same, are still unappeased. The men who judge by results are the worst specimens of humanity, and the more ignorant of the game they are the more positive will be their assertions. The man who scowls at you for playing in a manner different to his wishes is an abomination, because his remarks, although not expressed in language, are little short of unfair play, and he must be avoided. The passionate player throws down his cards in a rage before the game is lost, and he is not a pleasant partner; but the scornful player, who shows his contempt by looks alone, is, perhaps, the most awful. Each and all of these are constantly met with at the table, and we cannot wonder

that Whist is to many nothing more than a bore which must be endured, but need not be sought for by men who have other resources within their reach.

Familiarity, it is said, breeds contempt, and hence it is, we suppose, that husbands scold their wives, and *vice versâ*. At this game brothers quarrel with brothers, and friends with friends, as to whether A put on a nine when he ought to have put on an eight, or about some wretched rule of the game, perfectly right in itself but not worth mentioning, much less quarrelling about.

We have already spoken on the subject of temper: we asked you to avoid criticism, but if your partner will insist on criticising, "At every trifle scorn to take offence." It takes two persons to make a quarrel, and if you decline being one of the two there will be little harm done; and the next day, when cool and calm, if you just mention to your late partner and previous critic that you object to public remarks on your play, you will do more to close his mouth than by recrimination. Good humour, then, being one of the most attractive characteristics of man, is more immediately appreciated at the Whist table than elsewhere. "A soft answer turneth away wrath"; the good-natured man will return the soft answer and will keep the table in good humour.

Quarrelling is simply disgusting, and we are ashamed to write of such folly. Tell any person, not acquainted with the habits of Whist-players, that they go to the Whist-room for amusement, for the amusement of themselves and their friends, and that when they get there it is a constant source of petty annoyances, petty quarrels, and surely he would say all Whist-players are

idiots. Could you, reader, dispute the proposition, or the conclusion drawn from it? We cannot. We are convinced Whist-players are not gentlemen, and that they are a parcel of lunatics that have escaped from some adjacent lunatic asylum.

GRUMBLING AND GRUMBLERS.

The education of a Whist-player is peculiar. How he becomes a Whist-player nobody knows. He never learns his alphabet, or the catechism, or anything else he ought to do. He appears full-grown, mushroom-like. He remembers some one blowing him up for doing something that he ought not to have done, and somebody else blowing him up for not doing something else, and he is blown up to the end of the chapter. This phase of being blown up is varied by grumbling, sometimes aloud, sometimes *sotto voce*. So that the Whist-player is reared on scolding and grumbling, as other youngsters are reared on pap. Truly this is a happy life. Some men grumble on principle, because it is a national privilege, and they avail themselves of the Englishman's birthright. It is their own mess of pottage, and they partake thereof freely. Some do it again on principle because they believe that if they grumble enough it will bring them luck. Some do it in the hope that they will excite sympathy, and that their friends will feel for their ill-fortune, which, by-the-by, Whist-players never do.

Some grumble to annoy their friends, and we are

bound to say these succeed. They declare that they have not won a rubber for a fortnight. They have not had an honour for an age, although we are conscious they have scored them more frequently than we. This is a disagreeable habit that players might dispense with. We do not go to the Whist table to grumble or to be scolded, but to play Whist. We desire to enjoy ourselves in our own fashion. Our happiness is increased by seeing our friends happy; diminished by seeing those around us cross, angry, surly or disagreeable. It is the duty of a Whist-player to be agreeable as it is the duty of every man to do all else he has to do as pleasantly as possible. There has been no special commandment that Whist-players should be unpleasant to their neighbours. The disagreeables resulting from bad play are quite sufficient without the addition of real or imaginary grievances. If we play according to our means, and we entreat our readers never to play for more than they are prepared then and there to pay, it is of little consequence to third parties whether A or B win or lose. We may be sorry to see a man lose more than he can afford; but our sympathies are only then given on the assumption that he who so lost is a fool. We think that a man who loses more than he can afford is an ass, and we vary this opinion by sometimes assuming him to be a simple ass, and at others a dishonest ass; because the man is dishonest who plays for sums he cannot pay, just as much as he is dishonest if he takes our purse. We know it is very hard on bad players to have a continuous run of luck against them. It is harder on good players; but if the best players were to lose more than they could afford, we could give

them no sympathy on account of their loss. They ought to know that skill only occasionally tells, and that the most skilful may have such a run of cards against him that skill is of no avail. No man should play Whist who is not prepared to make a loss of sixty points. If he can afford to lose forty points—a common loss in an evening—then he should leave the table when his forty points are exhausted. If he goes beyond this, he runs the risk of being dishonest. For our part, we would say to a Whist-player, never take credit; and what is more, never give credit. It is painful to lose, but we believe it is more painful to win of a man who cannot afford to lose; and thus we are brought back to the point that there should be no credit at all at Whist.

The game should be played for ready-money only, and we believe that with this proviso nothing can be more harmless, as there is no game more interesting and exciting. There is no player of eminence that we have ever known that has not at some period of his life had a continuous run of luck against him for a month, and we have seen the best player of the party lose for a longer period than this. Whist-players, as practical men, should recognise this fact. We cannot understand it. We know not what luck is, but the fact of its existence in many forms is continually before us.

Grumbling is not confined to the bad players. There are, unfortunately, good players who indulge in this habit. Some of these will allege that in every hand their partner lost one or two tricks; that their partners always play wrong, and that if they had played differently the game must have been saved or won. The theory on which this class work is that one card can

make two tricks if skilfully played. It may be that this is true, but then we are not skilful players, and have not yet found out their secret. Play the cards over again in any way the grumbler pleases, and show that the game could not be saved and that this was obvious to the player found fault with, still they harp on the old string that you have played too rashly, and that you ought not to have led trumps, or you ought to have done something else. The difficulty of this class is that they cannot realise that cards will beat their makers; that skill is of very limited power as against the cards; and that no man (except this class of critic) can do impossibilities. So great is their skill that the hands were never dealt where, if they had been in their partner's position, they could not have saved the game.

Amongst the good players that grumble are those who say if their partner had played differently, or if something else had happened, the game would have been saved. What is the use of this kind of remark? We all know that if we had played differently a different result would have come about. If the player played correctly according to his lights, no remark of this sort should be made. Thus queen led. We, second player, having king, three, two, covered the queen. Our partner, fourth player, had the ace alone. At the end of the hand he said, in a melancholy tone of voice, "If you had not played the king we should have saved the game." He was quite right; but unless the grumblers desire to make all the players erratic in their style, or in doubt whether with king and two small you should cover the queen, what is the use of such remarks? One man grumbles at his partner because he has not won the game, when, in point of fact, it

was his own bad play that lost the game. We witnessed a case of this sort recently. A player played a weak game throughout, and at the end, with but three cards, he leads the seven of trumps. The third player knew the fourth player could have nothing but trumps. Third player had king, eight, three of trumps; he wanted one trick to save the game, and he passed the seven, knowing that the king must save the game no matter how the cards were situated. It turned out that player No. 1 had ace, queen of trumps, and, with two by honours, he ought to have won the game; and he grumbled and laughed maliciously at the third player's bad play. No doubt it was hard to lose the game; but No. 1 had, in this case, returned his adversary's lead the first trick, having a good suit of his own, and ace, queen, four trumps. He played for a ruff and got it; and having told his partner, by his play, that he had no strength, the third player was bound to save the game rather than try to win it.

The error was one of an old date, and although the grumbler thought it was the third player who lost the game, it appeared to us it was the bad form of the first player which caused the loss. The game was an easily won game, and if No. 3 had not been an observant player, with an eye to the score, the game would not have been lost. An instance (one of many) where the careful player loses when the careless and inattentive would have won. The lesson to be drawn from this is that you should not play for a ruff with a good suit and four good trumps. You should not play a weak game with strong cards, or, in the end, your own cunning overreaches itself.

There is another class of good players who bewail

their ill-luck when they get six trumps and make nothing of them, or get perhaps to the score of four instead of winning the game. They grumble throughout the hand, and turn round at the end of it and ask you "if you ever did see such luck as they play with? If I get a hand you see my partner never has anything." And we suppose they expect that if they have six trumps, their partner should have the like number.

This class take you into their confidence, and tell you of the extraordinary run of ill-luck they have. If they only win sometimes they would not care so much, but they never win. They reproach their adversaries for the number of trumps they have, and we heard one speak to an adversary and say, "In the last four rubs you have led trumps every time"; and when, under the impression that he was being criticised, this innocent player replied, "Well, I had good cards in my other suits, and I was bound to lead trumps." The grumbler replied, "Oh, it is not your play I find fault with but the cards you hold."

Some there are who grumble because they have forgotten they had the thirteenth of a suit, or the two best, when these two happen to be small ones, and in consequence lose the game, and apparently they seem to think their own want of attention has nothing to do with the result. These, again, with very good cards, lose the game by bad play, or by not taking the chances in their favour, and they seem to be surprised that others under like circumstances do not lose. Indeed, when the cards of a particular suit are as well known to a good player as if the cards were on the table, and the good player takes advantage of this knowledge to play in the most advantageous manner for himself,

they appear to think this the result of luck, forgetful for the moment that the game for the nonce is skill against luck. That the one player is playing with his eyes open, and the other with his eyes shut.

There is only one cheerful grumbler, and he ought to be immortalised. He goes in for something pretty every hand, and if one of these pretty things comes off in a rubber, although he has lost six tricks to win the one, he is happy. He points out one of these beauties, and gravely tells you that had it not been for this *coup*, you would have lost four by cards and two by honours, instead of three by cards and two by honours! He always expects to get more than he does, and believes it is his partner's fault that he does not get more, and he tells him so; but then he does not know how the extra trick could have been got unless you led trumps, or perhaps a club, and on being informed that you had not a trump or a club, he declares at once that it could not have been helped any way. Whereupon some good-natured friend reminds him that if he had not trumped his partner's best diamond, or if he had led trumps, the game could not have been lost. He is, however, a happy man, and one of his *coups* repays him for all the losses he suffers.

BAD HABITS.

All men have one or more bad habits. In our experience considerably more. As a rule men possess sufficient sense to keep their faults to themselves. The difference between the man and the Whist-player is,

that the former studies to conceal his bad qualities, whereas, in the latter case, all the bad habits are on the surface. There is nothing like Whist for bringing out one's peccadilloes. A man may be quiet and amiable; place him in a card room, and he is excitable and noisy. One that is the soul of honour out of the card room commits, in the card room, offences of which he ought to be ashamed. The law says, "Thou shalt not steal." Whist law says, "Thou shalt not by word or gesture give any intimation of the state of your hand. You shall not express approval or disapproval of what your partner plays." The man who would scorn to steal or cheat has no compunction in expressing, by his actions and features, approval or disapproval of his partner's play. The opportunity may not arise for his partner to change his tactics, in which event the player has taken a chance contrary to the laws of the game, or his partner may get in and act on the hint he has received. In the latter case the cheating is accomplished, provided the change of tactics took place in consequence of the previous shrug of the shoulders; and the player who so changed his tactics, has, in our judgment, made himself party to the fraud. We suppose men do not consider there is anything morally wrong in what they have done, but if so, it must be from want of reflection. It cannot be that any player who makes signs, even unconsciously, could defend their acts. Nor can we see that they do not commit a moral wrong—a wrong distinctly forbidden by the laws and practice of Whist. There are few points about which men, who are careful of their honour, require more frequently to be on their guard; and we say this advisedly, from seeing men who, we

believe, would scorn to do a dirty trick, and indeed who are, we believe, incapable of such an act, do at the Whist table what elsewhere they would be ashamed to do. If a man can express by looks or gestures his likes or dislikes, and no one can doubt his ability to do so, then at the Whist table he must, for his own reputation, keep a command over all his features. With some men it is doubtless hard to comply with these requirements, and with some we believe it is quite impossible. We do not now deal with this class, but with those who, from want of thought or inattention, say by gestures or otherwise what they ought not to say. Take half a dozen Whist-players and watch their countenances as they take up their hands, and five out of the six will speak as plainly as if they spoke with their tongues, "I have a good hand." "I have a game hand." "Mine is moderate." "I have not a trick in my hand." "What does it matter?" Why, the Whist-player is influenced for good or ill by the face of his partner. If it be all joyous do you think (unconsciously if you will) he does not feel the infection. Who would lead trumps to a gloomy partner in a doubtful case, or who would refrain from doing so when he heard the chuckle, or saw the smiles of his partner. It is not necessary in many cases to watch the face. The voice will tell. The tone speaks volumes. The trumps act as a bottle of champagne. The player who, a minute ago, was as dull as ditchwater, is suddenly talkative, and his talk shows elation of spirits—that must have been brought about by some cause. What is it? Not champagne, for he has not had any. It must be trumps, or else your partner has got a sudden thought; some playful fancy has entered his head;

and he is far away from cards and card-players, and woe is me! No one can tell all the ways that an individual may use to denote joy or misery; and it would be useless for us to attempt to point out even the most prevailing characteristic modes of speech. Each must examine himself, and find out what he does when excited or depressed, and he must bear in mind that our own faults, although easily ascertained when searched for, are as a rule passed by as no faults at all. We can see a very small speck on the character of another, but we do not always see similar, and perhaps larger, blotches, on our own escutcheon. We see how disagreeable such an one is; but we do not see how disagreeable we are. We doubt if the Whist-player exists who knows how disagreeable he is. If we could only see ourselves as others see us, would any of us play Whist? It matters not in what position of life men are placed; try them sufficiently, and they will all exhibit some bad qualities. This ought not to be so, for if a man can command his feelings in business —and all men more or less must do so, or business could not be carried out at all—why should it not be so at the Whist table. If we have to meet on business one that we dislike, we do not exhibit the dislike. We do our business and there is an end of it—the dislike only remains. So at Whist if we meet a man we dislike, we should either meet him without exhibiting our likes or dislikes, and without expressing in our face or by our manner that we think the player an ass, an idiot, or a sharper. We can go away, or play at another table. In business, men seldom show that they are fools. At Whist nearly all men do, and we do not make allowance for this difference. At Whist we allow

for nothing. We assume men to know what on reflection we know they do not know, and then get angry.

It is contrary to etiquette, and therefore a bad habit and wrong, to draw your card before it is your turn to play. A leads; Z, fourth player, before the second and third have played, draws out a card and places it on the table. It turns out to be an ace. In this case, nine times out of ten, the ace is the only card of that suit in Z's hand. Can any one doubt that the fact of drawing the card is a gross impropriety? That it conveys information to Z's partner, which information Z has no right to convey. Or again, having second hand played a nine, which third hand cannot cover, the second hand draws from his pack another card. Does not the second player say in as many words, "The nine is mine," a statement the law prohibits, and does he not say, "Do not take my nine? It is better for me to have the lead than you. I can do better with the lead than you." Or once more, a player leads out an eight, and it is his partner's turn to play. The leader then draws out another card. Does he not tell his partner in as many words, "The eight is the best, don't trump?" Or at the end of a hand, two cards in, A leads a winning card; B, his partner, cannot follow suit; and he is in doubt which card to throw away. The leader puts down the other card, and the second player then knows which to discard. Can this be right? From these examples it should not be difficult to see that by this breach of etiquette or Whist-law, if you please, a wrong is done ultra the laws of the game. A wrong whereby an advantage may be gained at the expense of your opponents. We do not wish to use any more harsh terms about such conduct. We led, a

short time ago, trumps, and we got out three rounds, and our partner had the thirteenth trump. We led a suit in which, on the round, the last player did not follow suit; and we led again that suit, to which the second player did not follow suit; so that when the trick was completed nine cards of the suit were out. This our partner knew when he played, and having the best and a little one, he played the little one, and to this moment he believes he played correctly. In a less simple form, how constantly does it happen that a player will not put on third hand the best, when a moment's reflection would tell him that if he wins afterwards with the best he must lose the game. Yet these men are dubbed by the outsiders Whist-players, and probably they think themselves Whist-players. In business, men do not commit these mistakes. They see fast enough, if they cannot win on their own line, they must change their tactics and fight on another. But the dull Whist-player never changes. What his father or grandfather did before him he will do again, quite regardless of the fact whether his father or grandfather gained by the operation. Notwithstanding their belief in the grandfather theory, they will persist in striking out lights of their own. The same man who will hold up the good cards of his partner's suit, and who will finesse against him, will persist in putting queen on knave second hand with ace, queen, or put on king or queen second hand, having two only of the suit, and they will declare that they have watched the effect for a series of years, and that it answers to do so. It is scarcely necessary to add that these players never know the effect of their play on their partners; they do not know that their partners reason from their play, and

that therefore they reason on false pretences. We thought we had seen the lowest depths of Whist long ere this; but, not long ago, we saw an original lead of a small diamond, second hand did not follow suit, third hand having ace, queen, ten, two, finessed the queen, and justified the finesse because he had four trumps. He said he certainly never would in that position, and with his strength, give up the command of a suit.

WRANGLES.

If with the theoretical knowledge we possess of the game of Whist we had played with gentlemen of quiet demeanour, and we had been asked what recreation would be the most beneficial for training the minds of the young for the occupation of life, we should have replied, Whist. Whist to our mind possesses all the necessary elements for practising in miniature the serious business of life. The qualifications necessary for success in the one are requisite for the other. If the mind is not sufficiently well balanced to withstand the temptations of the one, *a fortiori*, it cannot those of the other. The primary element to ensure success in any occupation on which we rely for our livelihood is temper. We speak on the broadest ground when we say that without command of temper bread is not within the reach of many of us, and we leave out the comfort or misery of life, which may be influenced according to our command of this demon within us.

The power to concentrate the attention on a given subject, for a certain time, can never be better taught

than by Whist. Mathematics are supposed to have this effect, but, in a problem, if the scholar's attention is diverted, he can go back. At Whist there is no going back. The opportunity missed is gone for ever. How many rubbers are lost by forgetting the turn-up card, or failing to notice which of two cards your partner played?

Patience is a necessary ingredient in the composition of a good player. With the game in hand, how many rubbers are thrown away at cards (as in life) by the inability of the player to wait?

If our theory be true, what could be better practice for the youngster than to test his powers in matters of little importance? To know that he possesses command of temper, the pupil must be placed in such positions that he is really tried. At Whist, if he fails, his spirits are cast down. With success he is elated. The prospect of gain and the fear of loss, in small matters as in large, is a more severe test than the real gain or the actual loss. The man who does not play seldom knows this fact, and never recognises wherein the excitement exists. The Whist-player is tried not simply by his own acts and defaults, his adversary may outwit him by superior play or finesse. His partner may fail to co-operate in the right manner and at the right moment; and so in life, men fail sometimes by their own defaults, at others by the mistakes of those with whom they associate, or on whom they rely. His own defaults may arise from want of observation, by inattention to what, at the time, seemed of no importance; whereas the smallest matters in Whist, as in life, may cause success or failure.

The young player may not recollect the fall of a three

or four. We do not say the two, because, next to the high cards of a suit, the two is the easiest to recollect. It is a card looked for the first round, and inferences are drawn from its non-appearance that very often affect the whole conduct of the game.

This is a point to which the attention of players has so often been directed in numerous games that have been published, that it is unnecessary more than casually to mention it here; but it follows from this that the non-appearance of a three or four may exercise a similar influence on the game, and the player who, from want of attention, or from the incapacity to observe, cannot read these tokens, must play at a disadvantage. It is the attention to little matters that is the cause of success. We do not refer to that carefulness in little matters which promotes prosperity, but rather that attention to little things that brings about great results, as in matters of science or mechanics. It is this kind of attention from which spring great discoveries, and which makes great Whist-players. Great discoveries do not come, nor are great players made, by instinct. A Deschapelles may arise in the Whist firmament, and may dazzle his fellows by his ingenuity and daring, but the ingenuity could not have been brought to bear without an accurate knowledge of the position of the cards, and the position can only be ascertained by the closest observation of the cards played. When a great coup comes off, the bad player either does not know what has taken place, or he assumes that it was the result of chance. Nothing can be more fallacious. The good player seldom goes for a grand coup. Never, except with a great object in view, such as to save or to win a game. He is satisfied

with a straightforward game, and he looks for success by his care and attention.

The habit of drawing inferences with promptitude can nowhere be better practised than at the Whist table. This is a power of vast importance in the affairs of life. The effect of a legal decision on a given stock; the effect of legislative action on an article of merchandise; the effect of evidence on the minds of a judge or jury; a new phase in the appearance of a disease, and numberless other instances, might be quoted to show the value of the power to draw inferences quickly and with precision.

Observations on different characteristics of men is of vast importance. The open-hearted and stingy, the cautious and rash, the trickster and the honest man, can all be more easily distinguished in a week's play than in a year's experience of the same men in business. What can be better exercise for the memory than to play fifty-two cards quickly, and to be able to recollect every card that is out, and to know from the fall of the cards the position of those that are left in, and to repeat this lesson twenty times in an hour? The moment the hand is played out we banish it from our mind, another faculty not easily acquired.

If there be any truth in all this, and the ideas we have endeavoured to express are not the hallucinations of a disordered brain, how is it that no man desires to see his son receive a portion of his education in a modern Whist-room?

We answer, that there seems something in the atmosphere of a Whist-room that changes men's nature, a miasma that poisons their blood, a narcotic that excites rather than soothes their brain, so that men who out-

side behave as rational beings become roaring maniacs or drivelling idiots the moment the cards are dealt. Screams, worse than those of a flock of parrots, assail the ear and jar the brain. The nerves are shattered, the mind unhinged, and in this state men are supposed to play a game requiring all their care and attention.

We do not refer to private play, although that is bad enough, but to club play. We desire to draw no exaggerated picture of Whist, and we faithfully reproduce what we have seen and what we have undergone when playing in a public room. To undergo this misery, to subject oneself to such annoyances, and to occasional insults—insult, be it said, not intended as such, but insult, nevertheless, to those persons not pachydermatous, and all for the love of Whist—is one of those things to which no one can submit without loss of self-respect. We may undergo such misery, but we do not desire our sons to enter such an arena or to pass through such an ordeal. We do not fancy any Whist-player will deny that Whist, except on very special occasions, is often a nuisance and an annoyance to its votaries; and we should be wanting in our duty if we failed to point out this great wrong, and to suggest, if that be feasible, a reasonable remedy.

For this purpose we must assume the fact of the nuisance of noise, quarrelling, wrangling, fault-finding, and the like; and we must assume, further, that, play as we will, whether the play be good or bad, if we play according to our lights, no man has a right to find fault with us. It is neither in the written nor the unwritten laws of Whist that one player has a right to find fault with another.

When we play stupidly (which from our nature we cannot help) it will be quite time enough for our partner to tell us of our misdeeds when we ask him, and we suggest that players should wait for this little ceremony before beginning to scold; and if the big talkers cannot wait, but will insist on acting according to their nature, and snap and snarl, and growl and howl, then the other players should leave the table at the end of the rubber, and say nothing on the subject. The offence is a club offence, not an individual offence; and it is not the individual but the club who should take notice of it. The club can put down this nuisance if it will, and if the club will not do so for the sake of peace and quietness, the club must take the consequences by the loss of its best members and players.

Much of this annoyance is occasioned by the laxity of club committees in electing men in no way fitted for club life. To select well is of course a very difficult operation. The committees must rely to a great extent on the proposals of the member, and then comes in the word, the most difficult to pronounce with the proper emphasis in the English language, the little word No. Of course there are men who can say No, but we believe they are all of them friends of ours, and they can say No to the writer only; *e.g.*, if we wanted to borrow a £5 note, and went down in the mildest manner to 1s. 6d., we are quite certain it would still be No; but if Jenkyns, who is the most disagreeable brute under the sun, asks you to propose him at the club, reader, in cold blood, you will think you will not do anything of the sort; but Jenkyns will persuade you for all that, and from your weakness you will allow Jenkyns to commit social offences against your

friends little short of murder, to which in your heart you must admit you are *particeps criminis.*

The first thing to recognise in club existence is that a member proposing another is answerable for the fact that the new man is a gentleman, in word, act, and deed, and if he turns out otherwise—and the proposer in reason ought to have known the nature of the beast—he, the proposer, should be tabooed thenceforward until he has purged his offence. Make men feel the responsibility they incur, and this will have an effect. Make men feel that scolding at Whist is a social offence against the club, and not only against the person scolded, and we shall soon have a change; and if this fail, let the chief culprit be brought before the committee for conduct unbecoming a gentleman, and if the committee are not the most weak-minded body in existence, they will soon put a stop to the nuisance, if only for the preservation of the good name and reputation of the club.

THE EVILS OF NAGGING.

There is nothing better calculated to break up a Whist society than a system of nagging. Those who desire to achieve this end can be insured success for a very small premium; and, if they have not sufficient ingenuity for the task, we can recommend the *Naggleton Papers* as calculated to supply their deficiencies. Except at the Whist table, men try to be agreeable to one another. A desire to please seems common to all. Losses at play should not make a man forget himself.

One is tempted to think that play is too high for the pocket when we see so much temper displayed. Yet it is the rich rather than the poor that express their anger, whilst the poorer brethren usually command their temper. Vulgarity is more offensive from the rich than from the savage. The latter is supposed to know no better. A gentleman cannot submit to the nagging process without loss of self-respect. The Naggleton drives away from the table and from the society the most desirable members, and in the end the players must consist of Naggletons. This statement is equally applicable to the Marlborough, the Portland, or any club there may be, at Timbuctoo or elsewhere. The rich Naggleton drives away the men who play for pleasure by reason of the high stakes. He cannot play unless in addition to the points and the table bets he can get £50 on the rubber, although perfectly aware that the poor man, if he played for such stakes, would be ruined. The rich man would be sorry to injure the poor man away from the Whist table, yet there he does not consider the man's purse, and far less his pleasure. He is the incarnation of selfishness, seeking his own pleasures and gain, and no thought is extended to the feelings of others. This is the Whist snob, not described by Albert Smith or Thackeray. A refuses to play with B because B is a bad player; he refuses to play with C because he will only play the table points; to play with D because D claimed a legal penalty for A's wrong-doing; to play with E because they have quarrelled and neither can bottle their pride and shake hands. Now, if A follows these tactics, and refuses to join a table in which either B, C, D, or E are playing, and he leaves the table as soon as either of those

players go in, and forms a fresh one. If F and G follow the same tactics with other members represented by other letters of the alphabet, what possible chance is there for pleasure to anyone? Pleasure there is none; for who can pay attention to a game when the passions are aroused, whether by ill-feeling already existing, or by the eternal cackling and nagging that occurs during a hand, or after every hand has been played. Yet what a pleasant game Whist might be. What infinite varieties and combinations of the cards. What room there is for observation and exercise of the reasoning faculties—observation which to the onlooker appears to be little short of divination. The pleasure of winning; the depression of losing. Pleasure and misery alike, whether the stakes are large or small, and this is all sacrificed for nagging and the love of high stakes. What jolly fellows have we met at the Whist table. What friendships we have formed, and the friendship may be lost, the pleasure certainly is by the admittance to our society of a Naggleton. Naggletons as a rule think themselves very fine players. We have seldom known a good player (that is one who gets the most out of his cards) a Naggleton.

Even if it were put on no higher ground, we should say that it does not pay to be a Naggleton.

You are tied to your partner for one rubber, perhaps two; make the best of it. If he muddles this hand he will only muddle the next all the more for the nagging, and it should be said with awe and reverence that the Naggletons are not all perfect. We have even known a Naggleton make a mistake—nay, they often induce the mistake in their partner, and then nag at him for the blunder. Grant that the Naggletons never make a

mistake, by what process of reasoning can they expect the inferior creatures, the partners, to be as perfect as they? The good player is he who makes the least mistakes, not the one who never makes a mistake, for this particular player has not yet been born.

> "O would some power the giftie gie us,
> To see ourselves as others see us."

And we might join together once again to try and be more agreeable, more amiable, more desirous to please and therefore less selfish. If the gods would but examine their own play, criticise their own play, put down the hands and see how many mistakes they make, and how many of their partner's blunders arose from their own errors, we might even yet find an Elysian Whist field, for which we have so long striven, and, alas, striven for in vain. If they would try to play down to the level of the inferior being, their partner, instead of making the game as difficult and obscure as possible; if they would give up playing for pretty things and win a trick when they can, at the end of the year their pockets would be less empty, and their tempers would not have been so much ruffled. If the great players would try to play a little for their partner's hand instead of entirely for their own, or playing with the game like a kitten with a mouse until the mouse escapes, there would be less cause for grumbling. It is our observation that when the great men throw away a game it is not their fault. It was entirely their partner's, who would not do something or other. The partner may be very stupid. He is necessarily stupid, comparatively speaking, but then if the great man has the game in his hand, is his partner's

stupidity a valid excuse? We venture to doubt. As four perfect players do not exist, it is rather hard that each man should be expected to be perfect. There are hands which are quite easy to read all through, but there are many hands extremely difficult to make out.

Mr. Naggleton of course knows all about it, and he expects that you do, forgetting that you have not his prescience, and quite oblivious to the fact that his means of information may be quite different from yours.

Many good players do not give themselves the trouble to see what information their partner possesses. They judge by their own hands. One man may know that a given card is led from weakness, the other may know nothing about it. The Naggletons may steal a horse; their partners are guilty if they look over the hedge. The Naggletons take great liberties with other players. They speak in a manner calculated to sever their friendship, and they presume to speak to strangers or comparative strangers, with the same energy, and in the same angry tone. We do not think that rudeness of any kind should be permitted at Whist, much less in a club. If the friend chooses to treat the matter lightly, the club should not. Familiarity breeds contempt. But why should any player be subject to the ill-natured remarks of every excited player? Because we sit down to play, we give no one a right to find fault with us; we play our best, and no matter what our follies may be, we suffer for them. The man who has £100 on a rubber when we have but £1 thinks he has acquired some extra privilege or right to scold. He has no such right. The £1 may be quite as important to the one player as £100 to the other. The rich man or big

bettor must submit to the ordinary laws of society, and if he loses he should bear his loss as becomes a gentleman. If he does not like to lose (as no one does) let him reduce his stakes, but anyway, high stakes or low stakes, he should in no way interfere with the pleasures of poorer men. We fancy that if we were rich the loss would not hurt us, and if it did we think we would bear it with equanimity, or we would retire from the Whist arena; but, be that as it may, we should not speak in a tone, or make such remarks as would keep a poor or inferior player from obtaining the pleasure he has come to enjoy. A member entering a Whist room presumedly comes to play Whist. In general society if he said nothing at all he would be asked to play, and not left to the exercise of his right; but in many places we have seen a little extra speed in cutting to keep out this player or that, and if the new comer is observant he has been told very plainly that he is not wanted. The players who so behave may fancy that this is excusable. The intention was rude or selfish.

Another player comes in and is asked to play. He says, "Oh, it will spoil your rubber, I cannot play as high as you are playing," and the modest man drops back. But should this be? If a set party is to be made up to play for given stakes, by all means let it be done, but in private, not in a general circle, and not in a club.

LADIES AS PLAYERS.

Most men tell us they have known good lady players; no doubt such beings *do* exist. We cannot,

however, conscientiously declare that we have ever met with one. They lead out their aces, and are careful of their trumps, "bottling them up" till the last.

It is somewhat extraordinary that ladies do not make good players. They seem to possess all the requisite qualifications for good play. Are they not careful of little matters in ordinary life? Are they not more generous than men? and do they not possess in a peculiar degree an intuitive perception of character, together with penetration and ingenuity? The knowledge of character is of no little advantage. How many men will let a placid smile steal over their countenance, or their eyes twinkle and beam with joy at the sight of a good hand; and what solemn and miserable looks bad cards will produce! Amongst the Conservatives there are many players whom we might designate card-players as distinguished from Whist-players —men who have acquired sufficient reputation to bully the youngsters, and who, in the eyes of mamma and the young ladies, are supposed to possess marvellous knowledge: these are the "cocks of their own dunghills," and are not the most pleasant partners in the world. Overbearing and dictatorial players are the greatest nuisance at the Whist table. We suppose their manners give pleasure to themselves, but they cause great pain to others. We confess to being testy and impatient, but we never expressed this impatience without sincerely regretting it, and determining that, come what may, we would for the future refrain from angry words, thoughts, or looks. No man should sit down to Whist or, indeed, any other game without the determination to keep his temper. In the every-day affairs of life a man would consider himself a fool, and justly

so, if he got cross or peevish ; and he knows full well that in a business negotiation he must have sufficient command over himself or his opponent will get the better of him. If this restraint is necessary in serious matters, how much more so over a game (an intellectual amusement at best) about which passion or ill-feeling should be quite out of place. But to return to the "cock of the walk" of whom we were speaking. If he drops his cards on the table face upwards he instantly snatches them up again, and insists, with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause, that he is not bound to leave them on the table unless his opponents can name them. None the less will this same old gentleman prove a sharp practitioner if you make a similar blunder: he will not recollect that what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

MRS. BATTLE'S OPINIONS ON WHIST.

(*By* CHARLES LAMB, *in the old "London Magazine."*)

"A clear fire, a clean hearth, and the rigour of the game." This was the celebrated *wish* of old Sarah Battle (now with God), who, next to her devotions, loved a good game of Whist. She was none of your lukewarm gamesters, your half-and-half players, who have no objection to take a hand, if you want one to make up a rubber ; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no ; and will desire an adversary, who has

slipped a wrong card, to take it up and play another. These insufferable triflers are the curse of a table. One of these flies will spoil a whole pot. Of such it may be said that they do not play at cards, but only play at playing at them.

Sarah Battle was none of that breed. She detested them, as I do, from her heart and soul, and would not, save upon a striking emergency, willingly seat herself at the same table with them. She loved a thorough-paced partner, a determined enemy. She took, and gave, no concessions. She hated favours. She never made a revoke, nor ever passed it over in her adversary without exacting the utmost forfeiture. She fought a good fight: cut and thrust. She held not her good sword (her cards) "like a dancer." She sate bolt upright; and neither showed you her cards, nor desired to see yours. All people have their blind side—their superstitions; and I have heard her declare, under the rose, that hearts was her favourite suit.

I never in my life—and I knew Sarah Battle many of the best years of it—saw her take out her snuff-box when it was her turn to play; or snuff a candle in the middle of a game; or ring for a servant, till it was fairly over. She never introduced, or connived at, miscellaneous conversation during its process. As she emphatically observed, cards were cards; and if I ever saw unmingled distaste in her fine last-century countenance, it was at the airs of a young gentleman of a literary turn, who had been with difficulty persuaded to take a hand; and who, in his excess of candour, declared that he thought there was no harm in unbending the mind now and then, after serious studies, in recreations of that kind! She could not bear to have

her noble occupation, to which she wound up her faculties, considered in that light. It was her business, her duty, the thing she came into the world to do—and she did it. She unbent her mind afterwards, over a book.

Pope was her favourite author: his "Rape of the Lock" her favourite work. She once did me the favour to play over with me (with the cards) his celebrated game of Ombre in that poem; and to explain to me how far it agreed with, and in what points it would be found to differ from, Quadrille. Her illustrations were apposite and poignant; and I had the pleasure of sending the substance of them to Mr. Bowles; but I suppose they came too late to be inserted among his ingenious notes upon that author.

Quadrille, she has often told me, was her first love; but Whist had engaged her maturer esteem. The former, she said, was showy and specious, and likely to allure young persons. The uncertainty and quick shifting of partners—a thing which the constancy of Whist abhors;—the dazzling supremacy and regal investiture of Spadille—absurd, as she justly observed, in the pure aristocracy of Whist, where his crown and garter give him no proper power above his brother nobility of the aces;—the giddy vanity, so taking to the inexperienced, of playing alone; above all, the overpowering attractions of a *Sans Prendre Vole*—to the triumph of which there is certainly nothing parallel or approaching in the contingencies of Whist;—all these, she would say, make Quadrille a game of captivation to the young and enthusiastic. But Whist was the *solider* game: that was her word. It was a long meal; not, like Quadrille, a feast of snatches. One or two rubbers

might co-extend in duration with an evening. They gave time to form rooted friendships, to cultivate steady enmities. She despised the chance-started, capricious, and ever-fluctuating alliances of the other. The skirmishes of quadrille, she would say, reminded her of the petty ephemeral embroilments of the little Italian states, depicted by Macchiavel: perpetually changing postures and connections; bitter foes to-day, sugared darlings to-morrow; kissing and scratching in a breath; —but the wars of Whist were comparable to the long, steady, deep-rooted, rational antipathies of the great French and English nations.

A grave simplicity was what she chiefly admired in her favourite game. There was nothing silly in it, like the nob in cribbage—nothing superfluous. No *flushes*—that most irrational of all pleas that a reasonable being can set up;—that any one should claim four by virtue of holding cards of the same mark and colour, without reference to the playing of the game, or the individual worth or pretensions of the cards themselves! She held this to be a solecism: as pitiful an ambition at cards as illiteration is in authorship. She despised superficiality, and looked deeper than the colour of things. Suits were soldiers, she would say, and must have an uniformity of array to distinguish them; but what should we say to a foolish squire, who should claim a merit from dressing up his tenantry in red jackets, that never were to be marshalled—never to take the field? She even wished that Whist were more simple than it is; and, in my mind, would have stripped it of some appendages, which in the state of human frailty may be venially, and even commendably, allowed of. She saw no reason for the deciding of the

trump by the turn of the card. Why not one suit always trumps? Why two colours, when the mark of the suits would have sufficiently distinguished them without it?

"But the eye, my dear Madam, is agreeably refreshed by the variety. Man is not a creature of pure reason—he must have his senses delightfully appealed to. We see it in Roman Catholic countries, where the music and the paintings draw in many to worship, whom your Quaker spirit of unsensualising would have kept out.—You yourself have a pretty collection of paintings—but confess to me, whether, walking in your gallery at Sandham, among those clear Vandykes, or among the Paul Potters in the ante-room, you ever felt your bosom glow with an elegant delight, at all comparable to *that* you have it in your power to experience most evenings over a well-arranged assortment of the court cards?—the pretty antic habits, like heralds in a procession—the gay triumph-assuring scarlets—the contrasting deadly killing sables—the 'hoary majesty of spades'—Pan in all his glory!

"All these might be dispensed with; and with their naked names upon the drab pasteboard, the game might go on very well, pictureless. But the *beauty* of cards would be extinguished for ever. Stripped of all that is imaginative in them, they must degenerate into mere gambling. Imagine a dull deal board, or drum head, to spread them on, instead of that nice verdant carpet (next to nature's), fittest arena for those costly combatants to play their gallant jousts and tourneys in!—Exchange those delicately-turned ivory markers—(work of Chinese artist, unconscious of their symbol—or as profanely slighting their true application as the

arrantest Ephesian journeyman that turned out those little shrines for the goddess)—exchange them for little bits of leather (our ancestors' money) or chalk and a slate!"

The old lady, with a smile, confessed the soundness of my logic; and to her approbation of my arguments on her favourite topic that evening, I have always fancied myself indebted for the legacy of a curious cribbage-board, made of the finest Sienna marble, which her maternal uncle (old Walter Plumer, whom I have elsewhere celebrated) brought with him from Florence:—this, and a trifle of five hundred pounds, came to me at her death.

The former bequest (which I do not least value) I have kept with religious care; though she herself, to confess a truth, was never greatly taken with cribbage. It was an essentially vulgar game, I have heard her say—disputing with her uncle, who was very partial to it. She could never heartily bring her mouth to pronounce "*Go*," or "*That's a go.*" She called it an ungrammatical game. The pegging teased her. I once knew her to forfeit a rubber (a five-dollar stake), because she would not take advantage of the turn-up knave, which would have given it her, but which she must have claimed by the disgraceful tenure of declaring "*two for his heels.*" There is something extremely genteel in this sort of self-denial. Sarah Battle was a gentlewoman born.

Piquet she held the best game at the cards for two persons, though she would ridicule the pedantry of the terms—such as pique, repique, the capot—they savoured (she thought) of affectation. But games for two, or even three, she never greatly cared for. She

loved the quadrate, or square. She would argue thus:—Cards are warfare: the ends are gain, with glory. But cards are war, in disguise of a sport: when single adversaries encounter, the ends proposed are too palpable. By themselves it is too close a fight; with spectators it is not much bettered. No looker-on can be interested, except for a bet, and then it is a mere affair of money; he cares not for your luck *sympathetically*, or for your play. Three are still worse; a mere naked war of every man against every man, as in cribbage, without league or alliance; or a rotation of petty and contradictory interests, a succession of heartless leagues, and not much more hearty infractions of them, as in Quadrille. But in square games (*she meant Whist*) all that is possible to be attained in card-playing is accomplished. There are the incentives of profit with honour, common to every species—though the *latter* can be but very imperfectly enjoyed in those other games, where the spectator is only feebly a participator. But the parties in Whist are spectators and principals too. They are a theatre to themselves, and a looker-on is not wanted. He is rather worse than nothing, and an impertinence. Whist abhors neutrality, or interests beyond its sphere. You glory in some surprising stroke of skill or fortune, not because a cold—or even an interested—bystander witnesses it, but because your *partner* sympathises in the contingency. You win for two. You triumph for two. Two are exalted. Two again are mortified; which divides their disgrace, as the conjunction doubles (by taking off the invidiousness) your glories. Two losing to two are better reconciled than one to one in that close butchery. The hostile feeling is weakened by multiplying the channels.

War becomes a civil game. By such reasonings as these the old lady was accustomed to defend her favourite pastime.

No inducement could ever prevail upon her to play at any game where chance entered into the composition *for nothing*. Chance, she would argue—and here, again, admire the subtlety of her conclusion;—chance is nothing, but where something else depends upon it. It is obvious that cannot be *glory*. What rational cause of exultation could it give to a man to turn up sice ace a hundred times together by himself? or before spectator, where no stake was depending? Make a lottery of a hundred thousand tickets with but one fortunate number—and what possible principle of our nature, except stupid wonderment, could it gratify to gain that number as many times successively, without a prize? Therefore she disliked the mixture of chance in Backgammon, where it was not played for money. She called it foolish, and those people idiots, who were taken with a lucky hit under such circumstances. Games of pure skill were as little to her fancy. Played for a stake, they were a mere system of over-reaching. Played for glory they were a mere setting of one man's wit—his memory, or combination-faculty rather—against another's; like a mock-engagement at a review, bloodless and profitless. She could not conceive a *game* wanting the spritely infusion of chance, the handsome excuse of good fortune. Two people playing at chess in a corner of a room, while Whist was stirring in the centre, would inspire her with insufferable horror and ennui. Those well-cut similitudes of castles and knights, the *imagery* of the board, she would argue (and, I think, in this case justly), were entirely mis-

placed and senseless. Those hard head-contests can in no instance ally with the fancy. They reject form and colour. A pencil and dry slate (she used to say) were the proper arena for such combatants.

To those puny objectors against cards, as nurturing the bad passions, she would retort, that man is a gaming animal. He must be always trying to get the better in something or other; that this passion can scarcely be more safely expended than upon a game at cards; that cards are a temporary illusion; in truth, a mere drama; for we do but *play* at being mightily concerned, where a few idle shillings are at stake; yet, during the illusion, we *are* as mightily concerned as those whose stake is crowns and kingdoms. They are a sort of dream-fighting; much ado; great battling, and little bloodshed; mighty means for disproportioned ends; quite as diverting, and a great deal more innoxious, than many of those more serious *games* of life, which men play, without esteeming them to be such.

With great deference to the old lady's judgment in these matters, I think I have experienced some moments in my life when playing at cards *for nothing* has even been agreeable. When I am in sickness, or not in the best spirits, I sometimes call for the cards, and play a game at piquet *for love* with my cousin Bridget—Bridget Elia.

I grant there is something sneaking in it; but with a toothache, or a sprained ankle—when you are subdued and humble—you are glad to put up with an inferior spring of action.

There is such a thing in nature, I am convinced, as *sick Whist.*

I grant it is not the highest style of man—I deprecate the manes of Sarah Battle—she lives not, alas! to whom I should apologise.

At such times, those *terms* which my old friend objected to come in as something admissible.—I love to get a tierce or a quatorze, though they mean nothing. I am subdued to an inferior interest. Those shadows of winning amuse me.

That last game I had with my sweet cousin (I capotted her)—(dare I tell thee how foolish I am?)—I wished it might have lasted for ever, though we gained nothing and lost nothing, though it was a mere shade of play: I would be content to go on in that idle folly for ever. The pipkin should be ever boiling that was to prepare the gentle lenitive to my foot, which Bridget was doomed to apply after the game was over; and, as I do not much relish appliances, there it should ever bubble. Bridget and I should be ever playing.

A HINT TO WHIST-PLAYERS.

(*From the old "London Magazine."*)

We (I and my constant partner in love and Whist) have had a long run latterly, like the bankers, of ill-luck. Night after night, for the cards are of as regular occurrence as our Hyson, we have lost an average half dozen of rubbers, without the set-off of one single point against the score.

Probably, it may be hinted here, that we are no adepts, and it would not become me to speak in contradiction. I confess willingly, that I am not a Hoyle;

yet, such as we are jointly, we have overcome players of high repute. Not unto ourselves, but to propitious Fortune we attribute those victories; and now, under our own reverses, we claim to complain, as the "Dabs" did, of a partial dispensation.

I can put up with an occasional bad card-hand as Job-like as anyone. A sorry, solitary deuce of trumps *now and then* does not put me beside my tenour. I can go trumpless once, twice, or thrice without an imprecation. I can sort, without pouting, some thirteen rabble cards, and endure, as heroically as Brightelmstone tradesfolk, a temporary privation of king and court favour. It would be strange if the losses and crosses I have suffered in human dealings had not taught me philosophically to endure any reasonable proportion of Whist adversity. If I can reckon up without fretting the niggardly balances that are made out to me by my bookseller, I may surely, without chafing, tell over a beggarly account of pips.

My gentle ally—as her mild, placid countenance might vouch for—exceeds me in resignation. She is the last Whist-player in the world to be put out by a fair average of mishaps, but the repeated frowns of fortune, fickle, alas! no more, but against us perseveringly constant, have ruffled even my meek partner. The acute mischance may be got over, but our confirmed ill-luck has become chronical. A temporary foul breeze may be worn out patiently; but a trade wind in one's teeth what mortal can bear?

There is nothing mortifying, it may be said, in being out-shuffled by a pack of pasteboard—that kings, queens, knaves, two by honours, or all the honours, fall to our adversaries, is the inevitable result of posi-

tion in the cards, and disparages neither skill nor desert of ours. They were ours, they are theirs, and may be ours again. That indeed is the pleasurable alternation in games of see-saw and of chance. But to rest always on the humble ground without any turn in the air; to be invariably cut by the better trumps; to be shunned by the aces, and never visited by the kings; to be sent to Coventry by all good cards; to thrive never, and, never thriving, to be sneered at, implicitly by the old scandalous adage; oh, 'tis intolerable!

What antique sacrifices, or mysterious ceremonious rites to the filleted goddess have we omitted? Will she never, *never* again turn for us the tables, as we have turned often our unwieldy, unlucky chairs?

I have not yet spoken of our worst grievance: there is a sore within a sore. It is the grave, demure, hypocritical visages of our conquerors, when they rise up, it may be, from their tenth victory, that gall us more than our defeat. With prim, serious features, more worthy of a Quaker rite than of Whist settlements, they pick up (the buckram dowagers!) and pocket the trophy coin. To judge from our faces, 'tis a drawn game—a fourfold disappointment—but Whist, as the world knows, is incapable of such lame and impotent conclusions. "Two," says Mrs. Battle, the eloquent encomiast of Whist, "two are exalted—two again are mortified"; but it would puzzle a disciple of Lavater to say which was which at the close of our melancholy rubbers. As far as physiognomy goes, the winners protest that they would as lief have forgone the double points, and the money. They have not achieved success, but had it thrust upon them. They repent,

like Coriolanus, of their conquest. They begrudge themselves—or might be supposed to begrudge themselves—their gains, if it were not a joint object with them to be as successful as sad. They are loath, so their formal looks signify, to put us to the trial of a triumph; or they fear, and half anticipate, the pigeon-like flutter of the whole brood of pasteboard about their wary ears.

If they mean thus—let them know that we hate their sham insincere moderation—we are offended by their uncourteous mistrust. Do they think, forsooth, that we can afford to lose so many shillings nightly—and of *that* they never affect a doubt—but that we are too poor in patience to put up with a simple smile? Is it less an offence to question our good breeding and self-government, than to hint a suspicion of our finances? Is the suppressed chuckle in their sleeves likely to be less provoking than the fair frank laugh against us? Do they flatter themselves that we perceived not, in the beginning, their ill-concealed titterings and gigglings behind their card fans, for joy of the lucky distribution? Did their lurking aces leap out lingeringly, reluctantly, or eagerly upon our untimely queens and kings? Did they chuckle or sigh, with overmastering trumps, to cut up the poor remnants of our hopeful suits? It would be better if they clapped their hands and crowed over us; bragging would be preferable to their mock-modesty. We scorn their untimely gravity, we resent their insolent humility. Do they think we are not competent to carry off ten times their prosperity, or our own losses, with an equal propriety? To be sure, say they, the honours fell very much against you, or some such impertinent con-

dolence. Do we or chance need their excuses? Do we writhe or blaspheme under our reflections? If at such moments I do betray some tokens of impatience—utter a few peevish pishes—it is because their triumph of temper has "triumphed over mine."

Is our skill so notably inferior, to find another explanation for their manner, that our defeat is a joyless and matter-of-course termination? Their good fortune, which made another result improbable, forbids such an interpretation. Nevertheless, in some rare instances aforetime, when chance favoured us, they have been pleased to express that no skill could compete with such lucky cards as we held, or some speech as tantamount to the assumption.

It is still possible, and for their modesty's sake desirable, that they are of those lukewarm players, the aversion of Mrs. Battle—the half-and-half gamesters, "who have no objection to take a hand if you want one to make up a rubber; who affirm that they have no pleasure in winning; that they like to win one game and lose another; that they can while away an hour very agreeably at a card-table, but are indifferent whether they play or no."

There is no offence in that case to any one but themselves in their listless achievements. They only amuse themselves in a melancholy manner (as Froissart twits us), according to the custom of their breed. But I would rather play (they must pardon me) against double-dummies, or be beaten by two wooden Whist-dolls, cousins to the chess-playing automaton. At any rate, since it is all one to their faces and feelings, I would rather that they lost than *we*, the money and the rubbers. 'Tis my pleasant infirmity not to be proof

against the excitements and the depressions of the game. A main good stroke of chance or skill makes me chuckle. I love to mutter a half-earnest malediction on an untimely ace. The odd trick makes me rub my palms together. I like to win my battle and then to have an illumination.

After all, possibly, I have done the dear dowagers an injustice. It is, perchance, but some formality-rule of the old buckram age that compels their features to that demure fashion. The courtly Chesterfield of sway, absolute in their school-time, denounces, I recollect, the vulgarity of audible and hearty laughter; and at or after a rubber of Whist he may somewhere have forbidden them to smile. 'Tis a maxim, perhaps, in some old Dilworth code of courtesy; but it is an error in Whist breeding and should be expunged. There is a proverb against it: "Let those laugh that win."

THOMAS PAM.

WHIST CRITICS—THE CLASS ROARER.

In speaking of Whist critics our friend the Roarer comes naturally to the front. When the Roarer was first mentioned in these pages he stood out in bold relief a head and shoulders above his fellows. His voice was high-pitched, and he spoke with that positiveness begotten by ignorance that admits of no question. To argue with him was a folly that few ventured upon a second time. He never appealed to reason, and only occasionally to facts. "You ought to have led spades!" and he dilates on the subject at the top of his voice,

never heedful of the meek reply, "I had no spade!" He bursts out, "You ought to have done so-and-so," and suddenly finishes up by asking, "How many of the suit had you? or how many honours?" and on being informed of the fact, the better sort sometimes admit that "under the circumstances you may have been right." He is quite unconscious that he should not criticise whilst ignorant of the hand, and he is oblivious to the fact that he has admitted that he knew nothing on the subject. Sometimes, indeed, the Roarer transposes the position, and asks first what you had, and then blows you up for not having played differently. Sometimes he says, "You ought to have led clubs"; and then suddenly turns round and asks, "How many hearts you had?" On he rushes, like a rhinoceros through a jungle, regardless of all impediments.

In days gone by, the Roarers were a species as distinct from the Whist-player as the ass from the horse. Things have changed since those days. The Roarer of that day is to the Roarer of this, as a hand-bell to great Tom of Lincoln. The old Roarer was a good-natured, kind-hearted, genial fellow. The Roarer now is querulous, opinionative, and ill-tempered. And whereas the old Roarer was a *rara avis;* now, all are Roarers, and it is only the greatest Roarer of all that can be distinguished from the others, as the queen bee is known from the rest of the hive by its enormous dimensions. Our old friend is completely quenched. Instead of rising to the great height of the present generation, he is completely subdued; so much so that he is nearly as quiet as a Whist-player should be.

The great characteristics of the Roarer class are loudness of voice, ignorance of facts, want of know-

ledge of the position of the cards, and an entire absence of all book-lore. To this may be added a supreme belief in their partner's perspicuity in divining when any player has played a false card. Thus, if the Roarer, second, third, or fourth hand, has played an ace, having the king in his hand, the unfortunate partner is a downright fool not to know who has the king.

The Roarers decline to give any information to their partners as to what they possess, and the chief Roarer contends that the dark game is the best, because, if you let your partner know anything, the opponents know it at the same time, and as he has two opponents to one partner (we wish we never had but two opponents) it is two to one against the modern style of play.

Next to abusing his partners, the principal enjoyment of the Roarer is to talk of his bad luck. His losses, we are glad to say, are considerable, and happy is the man who has not had dinned into his ears their extraordinary amount, and the number of rubbers he loses, owing to the want of skill of his partners.

The chief Roarer is not exactly an educated man. He speaks of the "king a trumps" and "ace a trumps," and at Piquet he insists, with his usual vehemence, that "three aces are not good, for he called fourteen jacks." If his great skill is successful, he chuckles, and says, "I done you there." He once abused an unfortunate Italian, with whom he was playing for the first time in his life. The vociferation and gesture were so great that the foreigner thought our friend was swearing. The Italian rose from his

seat, bowed politely, and said, "Consider yourself sat upon." We do not know what this meant, but the Roarer was quiet for upwards of ten minutes; and it is to be hoped that an Italian will be retained permanently on the establishment continually to sit upon any Roarer that appears therein.

We saw one of this class once make a mistake. Such an occurrence is so uncommon, that we think we may chronicle the fact. The great player had in his hand the ace of trumps and the best club. There were two other trumps in, and he had to get both tricks to save the game. The way he tried to do it was to lead the best club, on which his adversary, strange to say, played a trump. Of course, the great man said he played correctly, and, except in print, no one could deny the proposition without the risk of a headache; but, here we may suggest that the easiest way of saving the game was to lead the best trump first. If one of the adversaries has two trumps he must win the game, whereas, if the two trumps are divided the Roarer must save the game.

A very common ground for abuse is when you lead trumps—"If you had not led trumps we should have won the game." An instance of this occurred to us lately. There were four cards left in. It was our lead, and we had three small diamonds and the ten of trumps. The best diamond was to our left, and there was one other diamond, which might be in our partner's or in the second player's hand. Our partner had turned up the queen. He might have four trumps. We wanted one trick to save the game, and we led the ten of trumps. It was taken by the fourth hand with the knave. The king, ace of trumps, and the thirteenth

trump were led out, and we lost the game. In this position we could have saved the game by leading the diamond, because the fourth player must have trumped his partner's best diamond, and our partner having one diamond and three trumps must make his queen. This is a combination of cards somewhat difficult to foresee.

At Double Dummy the merest tyro could save the game, but our roaring friends never seem to see that the game is not Double Dummy, and that to master such a position (assuming it to be possible, which we believe it was not) requires Whist of a high order, and if the necessary spark of genius does not come, it is no sufficient reason for making a noise about it. If we had calculated that the last player had nothing but trumps, as by the fall of the cards can constantly be done, it would have been very bad play not to have led the diamond, but the Roarer never for a moment pretended that in the case before us he or we could have seen that the fourth player had nothing but trumps; yet, judging by the result alone, he took upon himself to criticise our play in a difficult position in the usual manner.

Another example and we have done. At the end of the hand we received the usual remark, "If you had not led trumps," &c. To which we meekly replied, "We did not want trumps; you asked for trumps, and we complied with your demand." To which the Roarer replies, "I did not want trumps, I dropped the high card first by accident, and anybody could have seen that I had done so"; or, "I put on the high card to deceive them" (the adversaries); or, "I wanted them to lead trumps, not you." This is a refinement of Whist we have not yet mastered.

"THE BLUE PETER."

(A VOICE FROM THE DOWNS.)

Yes, sir, you're right; Blue Peter *is* a sin,
A nuisance—an invention of the Devil,
When working at the helm!—'Tis like pure "gin"—
"Cream of the valley neat—*an unmixed evil.*"

Oft when I see the cruel pennon flying,
How my heart bounds and palpitates, and thumps;
Sure, 'tis *enough* to set a poor girl sighing
To see this cruel flag—this call for "trumps."

P'raps the *best* trumps—the *very* best of all,
My only one, may be, "my own dear Jack!"
And yet I'm bound to answer to the call,
And send *him* forth to strengthen the attack!

Is it not quite unjust—nay, almost "pelfish,"
For a strong tyrant *thus* my all to crave,
In honours rich himself, it seems so selfish
To wrest from me the *only one* I have.

Would it not be—I ask you, in all meekness—
Productive of results at least the same,
For him to leave me—pitying my weakness—
With little Jack to play *my* little game?

I hope he soon will go for his *last* sail;
Then, when I greet him once again on shore,
I'll pray, henceforth *new* methods may prevail,
To ask for trumps and "Peters" fly no more!

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

BOB SHORT'S RULES.

[It is an interesting fact, and one but little known, that these celebrated Rules were actually written by a distinguished lady—the authoress of the famous "Evenings at Home" and "Early Lessons for Children," &c.

ANNE LÆTITIA AIKIN, afterwards MRS. BARBAULD, was a versatile and high-toned writer. One of her biographers, Mr. Elihu Rich, remarks: "While a child she was remarkable for quickness of intellect, no less than for the natural goodness of her disposition; and in later years for the elegance of her taste, the extent of her acquirements, and her skill in classical literature."

"The simplicity of MRS. BARBAULD'S life and manners, and the purity of her soul, are well represented in the works which have made her name a household word in England—one to which the cause of education is much indebted."

"Bob Short" appeared about 1792, and enjoyed immediately great popularity, many editions being rapidly disposed of. The rules are substantially based upon "Hoyle"; indeed, "Bob Short" only professed to be "Hoyle Abridged."]

1. Lead from your strong suit, and be cautious how you change your suits, and keep a commanding card to bring it in again.

2. Lead through the strong suit and up to the weak, but not in trumps, unless very strong in them.

3. Lead the highest of a sequence, but if you have a quart or cuique to a king, lead the lowest.

4. Lead through an honour, particularly if the game is much against you.

5. Lead your best trump, if the adversaries are eight, and you have no honour; but not if you have four trumps, unless you have a sequence.

6. Lead a trump, if you have four or five, or a strong hand; but not if weak.

7. Having ace, king, and two or three small cards, lead ace and king, if weak in trumps; but a small one if strong in them.

8. If you have the last trump, with some winning cards, and one losing card only, lead the losing card.

9. Return your partner's lead, not the adversary's; and if you had only three originally, play the best; but you need not return it immediately when you win with the king, queen, or knave, and have only small ones; or when you hold a good sequence, have a strong suit, or have five trumps.

10. Do not lead from ace, queen, or ace, knave.

11. Do not lead an ace unless you have a king.

12. Do not lead a thirteenth card unless trumps are out.

13. Do not trump a thirteenth card unless you are a last player, or want the lead.

14. Keep a small card to return your partner's lead.

15. Be cautious in trumping a card when strong in trumps, particularly if you have a strong suit.

16. Having only a few small trumps, make them when you can.

17. If your partner refuses to trump a suit of which he knows you have not the best, lead your best trump.

18. When you hold all the remaining trumps, play

one, and then try to put the lead in your partner's hand.

19. Remember how many of each suit are out, and what is the best card left in each hand.

20. Never force your partner if you are weak in trumps, unless you have a renounce, or can ensure the odd trick.

21. When playing for the odd trick be cautious of trumping out, especially if your partner is likely to trump a suit; and make all the tricks you can early, and avoid finessing.

22. If you take a trick and have a sequence, win it with the lowest.

SECOND HAND.

23. Having ace, king, and small ones, play a small one if strong in trumps, but the king if weak; and having ace, king, queen, or knave only, with a small one, play the small one.

THIRD HAND.

24. Having ace and queen, play the queen; and if it wins return the ace, and in all other cases play the best if your partner leads a small one.

25. Neglect not to make the odd trick when in your power.

26. Attend to the score and play the game accordingly.

27. Retain the card turned up as long as possible.

28. When in doubt, win the trick.

TWELVE SHORT STANDING RULES FOR LADIES WITH SHORT MEMORIES AT THE GAME OF WHIST.

BY BOB SHORT.

1. Lead from your strong suit.
2. Lead through an honour.
3. Lead through the strong suit and up to the weak.
4. Lead a trump if four or five.
5. Lead the highest of a sequence.
6. Follow your partner's lead, not your adversary's.
7. Not to lead from ace, queen.
8. Not to lead an ace unless king.
9. Not to lead a thirteenth card unless trumps are out.
10. Never trump a thirteenth card unless last player.
11. Play your best card third hand.
12. When in doubt, win the trick.

☞ *The maid who hesitated was undone!*

TWELVE LONGER RULES FOR GENTLEMEN WITH SHORT MEMORIES.

BY BOB SHORT.

1. Not to trump with a bad hand, even with five small trumps.
2. When you play small trumps begin with the highest.

3. Make your tricks early, and be careful of finessing.

4. If strong in trumps force your partner.

5. You are strong in trumps with five small ones, or three small ones and an honour.

6. Never force your adversary with your best card, unless you have the next best.

7. If only one card of a suit and two or three small trumps, lead the single card.

8. Always keep a commanding card to bring in your strong suit.

9. In your partner's lead endeavour to preserve the command in his hand.

10. Keep the card you turn up as long as you properly can.

11. If your adversary is eight, and you have no honour, play your best trump.

12. Always consider your score, and play your hand accordingly.

> "The man that's captious should with cards have done,
> Or all the fair his company will shun."

THE KINGS OF WHIST.

(*From "The Westminster Papers."*)

To many it may seem late in the day to refer to the writings of Mathews. That gentleman was the finest player of his day, whereas his predecessor, Hoyle, was not. That we have reason to be grateful to Hoyle none can deny, for he first reduced Whist and his Whist views to print, and he was the leading guide for a generation. The game recommended by Mathews

appeared to die away, and to be entirely superseded by the publication of the charming treatise of Mr. Clay, and the writings of "Cavendish." These gentlemen were somewhat arbitrary in their views of Whist, and there has been something very like a revolt amongst the players, who have, one after another, thrown off the yoke as too heavy to bear. We do not, in any way, propose to criticise the latter writers, but only, as far as possible, to bring into prominence wherein the two systems differ. We will take first "Cavendish." He is peremptory on the point that you are to lead originally from your strongest suit (p. 55). We quote from the 10th Edition:—"In the opinion of the author it may be laid down as an axiom that in plain suits an original lead from a single card is, in no case, defensible" (p. 58).

Mr. Clay says that the lead of a singleton is generally condemned. He nowhere admits the propriety of a lead other than from strength, except towards the end of the hand, and in a desperate case, or where, having a bad hand, the lead from queen, knave and another may be of assistance to your partner.

Mathews says that the best leads are from sequence of three or more. If you have none, lead from your most numerous suit. If strong in trumps, lead rather from one headed by a king than a queen, but with three or four small trumps I should prefer leading from a single card to a long weak suit, and to this he puts a note. This is contrary to the usual practice, especially the players of the old school. Herein is the first marked difference between the two schools, although it is to be observed that the later writers are here the same as the old school. We have recently

pointed out that good players nowadays will not lead from a long weak suit, unless they are strong in trumps and have sufficient cards of re-entry. Mathews goes further than this. He says, "It is seldom right to lead from a suit, in which you have a tenace. With ace, queen, &c., of one suit, king, knave, &c., of a second, and the third a weak one, the best play is to lead from the latter." This is somewhat obscure, whether that obscurity is intentional or not, we cannot say. The Clay and "Cavendish" school would certainly lead from the ace, queen, suit, or the king, knave, suit, if they had four of either of those suits.

"Afford information by your play," page 95, "Cavendish." Experienced players are unanimous in admitting that it is an advantage to inform your partner of strength in your own suits, though some advise concealment of strength in suits in which the adversaries have shown strength. He goes on to refer to the practice adopted by many players of playing ace, having ace, king, or king, having king, queen, second, third, or fourth player, and concludes, "On the whole it seldom happens that a balance of gain results from the adoption of deceptive play."

Mathews advises that you should play to give your partner information in his and your suits, but to conceal your hand as regards your adversaries' suits. Thus, if you have a sequence, if your partner leads, win with the lowest, but if it were the adversaries who led, he would win with the highest, and thus keep the players all round in the dark as to the position of the next or two next cards of the sequence. We had occasion to remark that the players in the match "Cavendish" *v.* "The Westminster," always played

an ace having ace, king, second hand, and king, having king, queen, and it must be borne in mind that, of the four players on the "Cavendish" side, two at least of those players would rank in the first set of the present day. Mathews' system, whether recognised or not, is to some extent adopted by those fine players. The system is simple and easily understood, and not, as some would have us suppose, tricky and incomprehensible. Mathews does not say you are to lead from singletons or from weakness. He does not recommend the lead except with very strong trumps, and in those cases where another lead is disadvantageous. He recognises the fact which we all deplore, that we must, in the nature of things, have bad hands, or peculiar hands, such that the ordinary leads must be departed from. He lays great stress on the value of tenace or position. He points out to beginners a lesson that we have tried time after time to instill, but without success, that you must distinguish between an original lead and a forced lead. You are to play this latter suit as if it were your adversaries'. Keep the commanding card, and do not return it. Keep the trump card as long as you can, if your partner leads trumps, the contrary if your adversaries lead them. When your partner has a bad hand, play an obscure game, when he has a good hand, make everything as plain as possible. With only three of a suit, put an honour on an honour, with four or more you should not do it, except the ace should not be put upon knave. A knave, nowadays, is a very dangerous card to pass, and it is quite the exception not to put an honour on an honour. With ace, knave, and another trump it is right to finesse the knave, and if strong in trumps, it

is right to finesse the knave in other suits. With ace, knave, and another, do not win the king led by your left-hand adversary. This is, we think, an exploded fallacy, and if we were to play in this manner now, we should lose our money.

Our fathers followed these rules, and we meet an old player now occasionally who passes a king the first round, but if he indulges in this way before the trumps are out, he will more often lose than win. The leads that are given are few in number; practically they differ very little from the "Cavendish" leads. The latter are much more numerous, and the subject is treated more systematically and in detail, but there is little difference between them. With queen, knave, nine and others, Mathews recommends the queen in preference to the small one. He lays the same stress that Mr. Clay does respecting the small cards both in the play and the lead. We have in our eye a gentleman who thinks he plays according to Mathews, who plays every conceivable kind of prank. If he is leader and has a strong suit in sequence, he prefers leading from a seven and six, and he leads the six. He says, "Why should I let my adversaries know that I am weak?" But this is not Mathews. It may be a good system or a bad system, but it is not Mathews' system.

With these exceptions the difference between the one school and the other is very slight, and we suspect that "Cavendish" very often must have objected to that ancient plagiarist, Mathews, for stealing his ideas. Mathews wrote fully ninety years ago; yet the system of play from his time to now has changed very little, and it must be borne in mind that he was writing of Long Whist instead of Short, and he certainly

would have changed his game had the score been five all. He gives an example, for he says, "You are to play a closer game when playing for an odd trick. You may lead single cards, and force your partner, when at other times you ought not to do so. It is then seldom right to lead trumps, and few finesses are justifiable." To listen to players calmly talking of Mathews as advising the lead of the singleton, always is to admit that those talkers have never read his book, but talk from hearsay. The man who could not see the advantage of a long suit, could not be a good Whist-player. Mathews was quite aware of this fact, and speaks of it. "Cards being nearly equal, the points to which all the manœuvres of good Whist-play tend is to establish a long suit, and to preserve the last trump to bring it into play, and to frustrate the same play of their adversaries."

We trust we have said enough to show that in running down "Cavendish" it is not easy to do so without at the same time running down Mathews. If their ideas are not identical, it is rather difficult to find where the one begins and the other ends. It is unnecessary to say anything about the modern theories. We have spoken of these, as we thought, when they were first brought to our notice. They might or might not be approved by Mathews, but in the bulk the two systems agree. We should strongly recommend all players to read through the treatise of Mathews. It cannot do them any harm, and we think it might do good. It is very suggestive and very concise, and any one can get through it in an hour.

WHIST STORIES.

BY CHARLES HERVEY.

Not only, says Mr. Abraham Hayward, did we never meet with, or hear of, a Whist-player who could venture to boast with Turenne that he never fought a battle that he did not deserve to win, but we have heard an excellent one adopt the aphorism attributed to the Iron Duke, that a battle was a game in which those who made the fewest blunders won. Or a parallel may be drawn between the paladin of the Whist table and the damsel in the play, who took her married sister's fault upon herself, and is thus apostrophised by her brother-in-law: "Quoi, vous, Marie! vous, la vertu même!" Her reply is exquisite for feminine self-knowledge and tact: "O, la vertu, la vertu! tout le monde a ses heures ou ses moments." The most consummate skill, like Virtue herself, is not safe against a slip. Did not the late Earl Granville lose a rubber, after giving the long odds in thousands, by forgetting the seven of hearts? Did not Henry Lord de Ros lose one, on which £3,000 were staked, by miscounting a trump? Did not, once upon a time, the Daniel or Gamaliel of the Turf Club fail to detect a palpable revoke, to the astonishment and (it must be owned) gratification of the bystanders, some of whom went home consoled and elevated in their own self-esteem by his default?

A curious piece of evidence was given at the De Ros trial by a distinguished Whist-player, who stated that he had played regularly for about the same stakes during twenty years; that his winnings had averaged

£1,500 a year, making £30,000 in the aggregate; but that he had undergone two consecutive years of ill-luck, during which he lost £8,000. Another witness, a captain in the navy, who had realised a regular income by his skill, was asked whether he was not in the habit of dining on boiled chicken and lemonade when he had serious work in hand; and the alleged training (which he denied) was no imputation on his sagacity. No man flushed with food or wine, *vinoque ciboque gravatus*, will play his best; and every man who regards his purse or his reputation should leave off when he finds the sensation of confusion or fatigue stealing upon him.

A master of the art (Lord H. Bentinck), who had survived a generation, was asked who were the best Whist-players he ever knew. He instantly named three: the late Earl Granville, the Hon. George Anson, and Henry Lord de Ros. On being asked for the fourth, he paused, but there was no need of hesitation: "Ed io anche sono pittore." No one would have accused him of undue assumption if he had followed the example of Lamartine, who, on being asked who was the first living French poet, drew himself up with an air of offended dignity and replied, "Moi." The palm was popularly considered to lie between Lord Henry Bentinck and Mr. Clay, whose styles were so essentially different that an instructive parallel might be drawn between them after the manner of Plutarch. We regret to say that great Whist-players resemble rival beauties in one respect. Rarely will one admit the distinguished merit, not to say superiority, of another.

The De Ros affair was a sad blow and a temporary

discredit to Whist-players, for some of them were unluckily seduced into acting on the penultimate Lord Hertford's maxim: "What would you do if you saw a man cheating at cards?" "Bet on him, to be sure." Lord de Ros's methods of aiding his skill were only available for one hand in four—when he dealt. He then occasionally contrived to turn an honour by what is called *sauter la coupe*, and, having marked the higher honours with his nail, he could see to whom they fell. During the burst of scandalous comment which followed the exposure, one of the "bitter fools" of society, who would never have been admitted to his intimacy, drawled out at Cockford's: "I would leave my card at his house, but I fear he would mark it." The retort was ready: "That would depend upon whether he considered it a *high* honour." This repartee, popularly assigned to Lord Alvanley, was made by Charles Kinnaird Sheridan (the youngest brother of the three gifted sisters of the race), whose untimely and deeply-regretted death, in the bloom of his brilliant youth, was a *memento mori* which not the gayest or most thoughtless of his gay contemporaries could speedily shake off.

There is a well-authenticated story of the late Lord Granville's devotion to Whist. Intending to set out in the course of the afternoon for Paris, he ordered his carriage and four posters to be at Graham's at four. They were kept waiting till ten, when he sent out to say that he should not be ready for another hour or two, and that the horses had better be changed. They were changed three times in all, at intervals of six hours, before he started. When the party rose they were up to their ankles in cards and the ambassador, it was reported, was a loser to the tune of eight or ten

thousand pounds. About this time there was a set at Brooks's—Lord Sefton, an excellent player, being one —who played hundred-guinea points, besides bets. We still occasionally hear of three hundred and five hundred pounds on the rubber, but five-pound points are above the average; and many of the best players are content with two-pound points (ten, bet) at the Turf, and ten shillings at the Portland. A good deal of money is turned on the five to two (really nearer three to one) bet on the rubber after the first game.

There used to be high play at Berlin and Vienna. Count Palfy won enough at a single sitting of Prince John of Lichtenstein to build and furnish a château. It was shown to the loser, who, on being asked how he liked it, replied, "Pas du tout; cela a tout-à-fait l'air d'un château de cartes." There is a current anecdote of Count Rechberg, late Secretary for Foreign Affairs in Austria, which justifies a surmise that he also is a proficient, though, like a good many other inveterate Whist-players, he seems to think that everything is fair at cards. His left-hand adversary—*proh pudor*, an Englishman—made so desperate, though successful, a finesse, that his excellency uttered an exclamation of surprise, whereupon the gentleman offered a bet that the Count himself should acknowledge that he had a sound reason for his play. It was taken, and he then coolly said, "Why, I looked over your hand." This gentleman must have graduated under the Artful Dodger, who, while playing Dummy in Fagin's den, is commended for "wisely regulating his play by the result of his observation on his neighbour's cards."

Some forty years since, a remarkable set used to meet in Berlin at Prince Wittgenstein's, including Count

Alopeus, the Russian Minister, General Nostitz, Henry Bulwer (then attached to the Berlin Embassy), and the Duke of Cumberland (afterwards King of Hanover). Another of the Royal Family, the late Duke of York, played Whist a great deal, and lost a large amount of money at it—as well he might, for he invariably showed by his face whether he was satisfied or dissatisfied with his cards, and played them indifferently into the bargain. He played pony-points (twenty-five pounds) and fifty bet, making the full or bumper rubber two hundred and fifty pounds. One evening, having won three full rubbers of a wealthy *parvenu*, he was reluctantly reminded that there was a prior loss of some four thousand pounds to be set off. "No, no," he protested, "that will never do; we have nothing to do with old scores"; and the man was fool enough to pay. There is no royal road to Whist, and as royal personages with the best natural dispositions rarely submit to be taught, it is fortunate that the kingly power has been limited since Canute, who had a courtier hanged for checkmating him, and would doubtless have had him hanged, drawn, and quartered for claiming a revoke at Whist. This great and wise king had evidently come to the conclusion that the occasional execution of a courtier *pour encourager les autres* inculcated a moral more practically than getting wet feet through the disobedience of the waves.

When Napoleon was at Würtemberg, he used to play Whist in the evening, but not for money, playing ill, and inattentively. One evening, when the Queen Dowager was playing with him against her husband and his daughter—the Queen of Westphalia, the wife of Jerome—the king stopped Napoleon, who was taking up a

trick that belonged to them, saying, "Sire, on ne joue pas ici en conquérant."

It must be admitted, as a partial excuse for absolutism, in such matters, that the spirit of play absorbs or deadens every other feeling. Horace Walpole relates that, on a man falling down in a fit before the bay-window at White's, odds were instantly offered to a large amount against his recovery, and that, on its being proposed to bleed him, the operation was vehemently resisted as being unfair. When Lord Thanet was in the Tower, for the O'Connor riot, three friends—the Duke of Bedford, the Duke de Laval, and Captain Smith—were admitted to play Whist with him, and remain till the lock-up hour of eleven. Early in the sitting, Captain Smith fell back in a fit of apoplexy, and one of the party rose to call for help. "Stop," cried another, "we shall be turned out if you make a noise; let our friend alone till eleven; we can play Dummy, and he will be none the worse, for I can read death in his face."

The clergy, especially of the West of England, were formerly devoted to Whist. About the beginning of the century there was a Whist club in a country town of Somersetshire, composed mostly of clergymen, that met every Sunday evening in the back-parlour of a barber. Four of these were acting as pall-bearers at the funeral of a reverend brother, when a delay occurred from the grave not being ready, or some other cause, and the coffin was set down in the chancel. By way of whiling away the time one of them proposed a rubber.*

* This story (it is to be hoped apocryphal) was currently told of Mr. Abraham Hayward's uncle, the Rev. Richard Abraham, vicar of Ilminster and Chaffcombe—a man distinguished by learning and wit.

The rest gladly assented, and they were deep in their game, using the coffin as their table, when the sexton came to announce that the preparations were complete. We have carefully verified the fact that they played Long Whist, and we suspect Whist has been less popular in the Church since the introduction of Short, by reason of its inferior gravity. The principle is indicated by Sydney Smith in his qualified defence of angling: "I give up fly-fishing; it is a light, volatile, dissipated pursuit. But ground-bait, with a good steady float that never bobs without a bite, is an occupation for a bishop, and in no way interferes with sermon-making."

It was the Rev. Richard Abraham who, on being nominated to his living by Lord North, preached his first sermon on the text, "Promotion cometh not from the east, or the west, neither from the south." He resided mostly at Bath, on the plea of ill-health, and frequently helped to form the card-party of Mrs. Beadon, the wife of the Bishop of Bath and Wells. "Mr. Abraham," said the Bishop one morning, "it strikes me that if you are well enough to sit up half the night and play Whist, you must be well enough to do duty at your living." "My lord," was the reply, "Mrs. Beadon will tell you that late Whist acts as a tonic or restorative to dyspeptic people with weak nerves." The lady at once made the case her own, and her power over her reverend lord was so well established that the diocese credited her with the entire distribution of his patronage. After his death she became well known to the world of Mayfair by her Whist-parties, which rivalled those of Lady Tancred and the old Lady Salisbury who was burnt.

Henri Beyle (Stendhal), musing over an interrupted

liaison and a lost illusion, exclaims, "After all, her conduct is rational. She was fond of Whist. She is fond of it no longer; so much the worse for me, if I am still fond of Whist." So much the better for him, as he had still an inexhaustible resource; and he would have gained nothing by abandoning it. She was no longer fond of Whist, because she was no longer fond of him.

A TRUE STORY OF A LEGACY AND SOME GAMES OF WHIST.

About ten o'clock one fine summer's night, a good many years ago, a gentleman who, from his sunburnt features, had evidently only lately arrived from abroad, and from a very hot climate, was walking alone in Cremorne Gardens, enjoying at once a fragrant Havana and listening to the music, to which the votaries of Terpsichore were merrily dancing on the circular platform. From the placid manner in which he listened and gazed on the bright scene before him, it was evident he was not an *habitué* of the gardens, or accustomed to join in the revelling. His walk was interrupted by a gentlemanly-looking man, who politely asked for a light to his cigar. This of course was given, and acknowledged by the lifting of his hat in the most pronounced fashionable form.

The stranger, who for convenience sake it will be as well to call Robinson, was about to pass on his way, when his progress was stayed by an observation from the polite gentleman, to the effect that it was a charm-

ing evening and a very gay scene. To which not very original observation Mr. Robinson of course replied; and so a conversation began, and was continued during a walk round the grounds. Mr. Robinson was asked to try a very choice cigar, offered by—let us at once call him—Smith, which he accepted, and admitted to be excellent, better than he had smoked for a long time—better far than he had ever seen in the country he came from.

"Oh!" said Smith, "are you a foreigner?"

"Yes, from Demerara," replied Robinson; "and I only reached England a day or two ago."

"How strange," rejoined Smith, "I have a friend who resides there; I wonder if you know him—his name is Jones. He was a doctor in the 161st, fell in love whilst serving with his regiment, married and settled in the island."

"I know him quite well," replied Robinson," but by sight only. He is, I fear, a loose fish, and does not bear the best reputation. He is too fond of the good things of life. I saw him only a day before I left. He was at my lawyer's, on some business connected with his wife's estate, on which, as I heard, he was trying to raise money."

"I'm glad to hear the old boy is still in the land of the living," said Smith; "he always was fast, and will no doubt be so to the end of the chapter; but his heart was in the right place. He and I have not met for years."

The conversation, thus begun, was cemented by a drink at the bar, until at length Smith suggested that after all the place was "slow," and that except to those who wished to indulge in a flirtation with a fair one

there was more real fun at Evans's. Robinson had heard of the place, would like of course to see it—beyond everything.

"What do you say then?" said Smith; "let's go there at once."

Robinson assented, and a Hansom soon conducted them to Covent Garden. Smith kept up such a lively and interesting chat, that Robinson mentally voted him a most agreeable fellow. The usual friendly dispute arose as to payment for the cab, in which Smith was the victor, and they were about to enter the hall of the celebrated Paddy Green, when Smith suddenly recollected it was far too soon to go in, as there would be no one there till after the theatres, and he suggested a cup of coffee and a cigar to pass away an hour. Nothing loth, Robinson assented, and they walked on till they reached a cigar-shop, which, at the period of our history, existed opposite to the private-box entrance of one of the large theatres, a plain old-fashioned looking shop, not well stocked with cigars, with a dark-coloured curtain closely drawn across the inner window, so as completely to shut out the view of what was passing from the street, a similar curtain being drawn across the window in the shop-door.

Smith, upon entering, asked the shopkeeper for one of his best cigars, and pointing to a room beyond, fitted up with tables and sofas—a sort of divan in fact—inquired whether they could be supplied with coffee. The shopkeeper informed him that they could, and our friends were in the act of going into the room, when two gentlemen entered the shop, each talking in a loud voice, and both together, so loud and so earnestly as to call the attention of our friends to them.

"I tell you I'm right," said the first; "I'll lay a hundred to one—a thousand if you like."

"I know I'm right," said the other, "though I don't want to bet; I never do, as you know. Still, I'm not the less right."

"I'll tell you what I'll do," replied the first disputant, "I'll leave it to this gentleman—pointing to Robinson—and bet you four cups of coffee and cigars I'm right."

"Done," said the non-betting gentleman, and all four walked into the inner room, where the question in dispute was submitted to Mr. Robinson. It was this:—I hold king, knave, ten, and two small cards of a suit at Whist, which is the correct card to lead, as an original lead? Mr. Robinson decided it was the ten, and so awarded the bet in favour of the gentleman who had said he never betted, his friend appearing much chapfallen at the decision, having been vehement in declaring it was the knave which should be led.

The coffee and cigars were brought in, and of course, the subject of Whist having been broached, the conversation as to the game was continued, until at length Smith observed, "I wonder if we could have a rubber here?" It was soon found that they could. Cards were produced, and Robinson and Smith were partners against the two strangers, who introduced themselves as Green and Brown by name. The stakes were at first for cups of coffee only, afterwards for half-crown points, and finally for half-sovereign points, with a sovereign on the rubber, Robinson and Smith continuing to be partners, and the play terminated by each losing between £5 and £10.

All four gentlemen then adjourned to Evans's, and

quite late at night separated with an engagement for the following evening, at the same shop, when Robinson and Smith were to have their revenge. Smith insisted on walking with Robinson to his hotel, and on the road the latter imparted to his newly-found friend the interesting fact that he had come to England for the purpose of receiving a legacy amounting to £4,000, that he was to go to the Bank of England and receive the money in the course of a day or two; and that during the time he had been in town he was amusing himself with seeing the sights of London. Hence his visit to Cremorne.

Smith, before leaving, handed Mr. Robinson his card, adding how happy he should be to chaperone his newly-found friend to some of the marvels of London, which, unless well directed, Mr. Robinson would be sure to miss. Robinson, quite delighted with his new friend, who had all the appearance and manners of a polished gentleman, invited him to dine at his hotel on the following day; and Smith, with some apparent hesitation, accepted; and so they parted for the night.

Smith was punctual to his dinner engagement, and after dessert and a bottle of port, they started in the direction of Covent Garden, to keep their appointment, and play the return rubber. Their opponents had not arrived, but made their appearance shortly afterwards, apologising for being late, observing incidentally, that they had been dining with some friends in Eaton Square, and could hardly manage to get away—in fact, they had forgotten their engagement when making the appointment, but as they had won on the last occasion, they did not like to fail in their engagement. We may remark, by the way, that Green and Brown were

each well dressed, in evening costume, and were tall gentlemanly-looking men.

Coffee, cigars, and cards were produced, and play soon began, Messrs. Robinson and Smith again being partners. At first fortune favoured them, they won back considerably more than they had lost. But the fickle goddess again deserted them, and Messrs. Robinson and Smith each lost £50 odd. In the case of our friend Robinson this was more than he had about him, and on the fact being stated by him, Mr. Smith forthwith drew out his pocket-book, and insisted, on behalf of his friend, in discharging the debt.

The play appeared to be even, and Mr. Robinson, who was a good sound player, though not brilliant or first class, was of opinion that Smith's play was slightly better than either Green or Brown. The result, it was evident, was entirely due to the marvellous ill-luck with which at every critical point of the several games their opponents scored honours, or had overwhelming hands.

Before separating, Smith stated that he had invited a few friends to a fish dinner on the following Monday, and would be glad if all of them would join. Mr. Robinson regretted his inability to do so, as he had an important engagement for that day with his lawyer, to go to the City. On which Smith insisted upon altering the day, and Tuesday was fixed upon, at the "Trafalgar."

After some general conversation Brown and Green left, and Robinson and Smith went to the lodgings of the latter in Weymouth Street, Oxford Street. Here they had more smoke and chat, and to pass the time a game of Ecarté for half a sovereign a game. Robin-

son played well and with good luck, and won £5 which Smith would insist on paying in cash, though Robinson owed him £25, the amount he had previously paid.

Smith had described himself as a law student, whose friends lived in the city, and as he was anything but a working man, in fact a very idle one, he offered on the following day (Sunday) to take Mr. Robinson to Richmond, and promised to call for him after church hours, and drive him down in his trap.

Mr. Robinson agreed to the suggestion, and on the following day, at about two o'clock, Smith drove to the hotel in a smart phaeton, accompanied by an equally smart groom, in unexceptionable livery of the quietest pattern; the whole turn out being of its kind perfect, the horse not less so than the appointments. The drive to Richmond was rapid, and on arriving at the Star and Garter, a glass of sherry and a biscuit discussed, dinner ordered, they went down the river, chartered a wherry, and pulled up to Teddington. Robinson was charmed with the scenery, and Smith made himself very agreeable, showing a perfect knowledge of all the river reaches, and of the dwellers by the water-side. The dinner, as in those days it used to be at the Star, was capital, the wine first-class, and the cigars afterwards; so, when Smith (who had insisted on paying) at ten at night had deposited Mr. Robinson in safety at his hotel, he declared with perfect truth that he had passed a delightful day. He should not be able to see Mr. Smith till the evening of the following day, when he hoped he would dine with him at his hotel. This invitation was accepted, and the friends parted. Mr. Robinson was very busy all the next day, for he was in

Lincoln's Inn at his lawyer's by eleven o'clock. Here he met an uncle from the country, the surviving trustee of his father. Then there was a great signing of deeds, re-leases, and accounts, and a vast deal of legal formality to go through, until, about two o'clock, Mr. Robinson, his solicitor, and uncle took cab to the Bank of England, and the sum of £4,375 in crisp new Bank of England notes found themselves safely buttoned up in Mr. Robinson's breast coat pocket.

As they were leaving the office of the stock-broker, where the business was finally completed, by one of those singular "accidents," which at times happen to all of us, Mr. Smith passed. He started with surprise, but only acknowledged his acquaintance with Robinson by raising his hat, and walked on. His uncle asked who that was, and was informed that he was a friend of Dr. Jones, of Demerara.

The party then returned to Lincoln's Inn, and finished the signing of documents, and Robinson having seen his uncle off by a train at Euston, returned to his hotel at six o'clock, where he found Smith *just arrived.* After dressing, Robinson conducted Mr. Smith to a snug private room, where, at Smith's suggestion, he had ordered dinner to be served, the coffee-room being voted a nuisance.

Here they had a capital little dinner and some famous old port; afterwards Mr. Robinson amused his friend with a quizzical account of his old uncle, the lawyer, and the whole business of the day. Robinson discharged his debt by a cheque on a London Bank, where he had that day opened an account. He then proposed a game of Ecarté, and they played two games, each winning one, when Smith begged to be excused

playing longer, pleading headache as an excuse, and he left early, promising to call for Mr Robinson at four o'clock on the following afternoon, and drive him down to Greenwich. He should then, he observed, send back the trap, and they could return, whenever it suited them, by rail.

Mr. Smith was punctual to his appointment on the following day, and our friends were soon *en route* for Greenwich, where they arrived without accident. Smith ordered dinner at seven, for six persons, and then strolled out with Mr. Robinson into the Hospital, which they examined with great interest, and thence to the Park, returning in good time for dinner. Green and Brown had arrived, and soon afterwards two other gentlemen made their appearance. It is unnecessary to give their names, as after they were introduced to Mr. Robinson they expressed their great regret at being unable to stay later than eight o'clock, having particular engagements in London, and they did in fact leave before the dessert was put on the table.

The dinner—served in a private room—was most *recherché*, and Robinson thoroughly enjoyed the fish, never before having partaken of such a repast. He did not fail either to do ample justice to the dry champagne or to the very "curious" old port; and when, after dinner, he was on the verandah overlooking the river, smoking his cigar, he declared he had never had so good a dinner in his life.

The evening being chilly, the windows were soon closed, candles lighted, a card table set out, and the four sat down to Whist.

Smith, whilst walking in the Park, had hinted that he should try and increase the stakes, as he felt con-

fident they should be able to get back the money they had lost; and accordingly at his suggestion it was agreed they should play pound points, with £5 on the rubber, giving and taking 5 to 2 in pounds.

The play began about nine, and by eleven o'clock our heroes found themselves losers of £100 each, this large amount being due to several bets which from time to time had been made on individual hands.

Smith appeared much excited at his losses. Robinson was calm and indifferent, but anxious no doubt to get back his money. Smith said he should have new cards, as those with which they had been playing only brought bad luck, and he rang the bell for the purpose, and ordered the waiter to bring two new packs of cards. He left the room as he said to wash, and on returning brought back the new cards, which he observed the fellow was crawling up the stairs with as he came past.

The game was resumed, and Smith and Robinson won the first rubber with the new cards. During the next game Robinson had to deal, and having shuffled the cards, placed them for Brown to cut. Smith *asked him to ring the bell, as he wanted some brandy and soda. Robinson left the table to do so,* and on his return proceeded to deal, and turned up the ace of spades.

Upon sorting his hand, he was astonished to find that he held, besides the ace, the king, queen, knave, ten and nine of trumps, ace and king of hearts, ace and king of clubs, with two small ones, and the queen of diamonds. He observed that he would bet 100 to 1 he won the game.

Green, who appeared to be intently studying his hand, said, "Don't be too sure of that; I think we shall make the odd trick."

Robinson replied it was impossible, and added, "I'll bet you £1,000 to £50 upon it."

"Done," said Green, and amidst the greatest excitement the game proceeded.

Green led king of diamonds, to which his left-hand opponent followed suit, and so did Brown, and Mr. Robinson's queen fell. Green then led ace of diamonds; this Mr. Robinson trumped with the nine, and played the king of trumps. Green followed suit, but it was found that neither of the other players held a trump. Mr. Robinson then saw that Green had originally held seven trumps, whilst he had only six, one of which had been forced by the ace of diamonds, leaving him (after he had played the king of trumps) with four, whilst Green held five. On making this discovery, Mr. Robinson played king of hearts; this Green trumped and played knave of diamonds, which Mr. Robinson trumped, and then again changed his lead to king of clubs; but this was also trumped by Green, and the ten of diamonds led, and so Mr. Robinson was again forced. In the result, as the Whist-player will understand, Green, who held seven trumps and *six diamonds*, by forcing Mr. Robinson's hand, was left with the thirteenth trump, scored the odd trick, and won the bet.

Mr. Smith was profuse in his expressions of regret and condolence, observing that Robinson had no right to make such a bet, and that, for his part, he was disgusted at it, as he considered high play ought not to be tolerated, and that he would never have sanctioned it.

Mr. Robinson, when he recovered from the shock, said he would not play any more that night, and, draw-

ing a cheque book from his pocket, he handed one to Mr. Green for £1,500, and to Mr. Brown (for by-bets) £200; Mr. Smith at the same time giving his check for £350, the amount he had lost.

Upon reaching the station the last train to London was found to have gone. After some delay, a brougham and pair was found, and the party reached town, Green kindly inviting them to dine with him at the Castle at Richmond, and he would give them a chance to get their money back. The invitation was accepted, and an early day appointed.

Smith did not accompany Robinson to his hotel as usual, pleading fatigue; but early next morning he called on Mr. Robinson and breakfasted with him.

Mr. Robinson was not in the best of spirits, and Smith appeared to be no less disgusted with the result of the past night's amusement. He hinted—rather than stated—his suspicions of Green. It was certainly *very* strange how constantly he won! It was *very* remarkable that two such hands should have been held! Though such things do—they say—happen with new cards, not properly made, and so on. Mr. Robinson listened; but was too indolent, or too indifferent, to reply; and so, breakfast being finished, they strolled out, and went to lionize London.

At night they visited the opera; and the following day Smith, whose attention to Mr. Robinson never flagged, took him to the Crystal Palace, and dined there, returning early to town. Throughout the day Smith kept harping on their marvellous ill-luck; and at length he said, "I shall only give myself one more chance, and if I don't get my money back to-morrow (the day appointed for dinner) I shall cut them, as I

can't afford to lose so much money; and look here, old fellow," he added, "if you hear me offer to lay a bet over £50 you may lay your life to a guinea the game is in my hands, and lay it on heavy, so as to get your money back"; and with these words he left.

Mr. Robinson pondered on these words, and it must be admitted the thought entered his mind that the suggestion was *hardly* right, and that it partook somewhat of confederacy. His keen sense of honour however was a little sullied by his heavy losses, and he mentally desired to get his money back if he could.

The dinner at the Castle was all that could be desired, the wines perfect, the cigars first-class, and as usual the card-table was set out in due course. Robinson and Smith won several rubbers in succession—some twenty points—with bets amounting to upwards of £100.

Robinson was in capital spirits. The play continued some time with varying success; when it came to Smith's turn to deal, and he turned up king of hearts. He rapidly glanced at his hand, and said (the game stood four all), "I'll bet 200 to 1 we win the game."

"Done," said Green. "I'll take it in monkeys if you like."

"No," said Smith.

On which Mr. Robinson laughingly said, "What *is* a monkey?"

This being explained to him, *and with a look at Smith, who nodded assent,* he said, "I lay it. £1,000 to £500."

The bet was accepted. Mr. Brown thereupon observed he would take £200 to £100 each side, and this bet was also laid, and the game proceeded.

At the third lead Brown played ace of clubs, to which Smith played a diamond, exclaiming, "I trump it!"

"Trump?" said Robinson, "hearts are trumps!"

"No," replied Smith, in great excitement, "diamonds are trumps. I turned up king of diamonds."

He was of course undeceived by all three; on which he placed his cards on the table, but, taking them up again, played out the hand, and lost the odd trick and the game.

No sooner was the game over than, without a word, Smith rose, or rather staggered, from the table, and was making for a sofa, when he fell to the ground, apparently in a fit. His cravat was loosened, water thrown in his face, the window opened for air, but all without effect. A waiter was sent for a doctor, who promptly arrived, but only in time to see the patient just recover his consciousness, and in the act of taking some brandy. He explained that he had been subject to fits from boyhood, when too much excited, and that he was then all right again.

The medical gentleman, having pocketed his guinea, departed, and the play finished. Mr. Robinson on this night lost £1,500, which he paid to Green and Brown; and Smith lost £400, which he paid, and the party went back to London, Mr. Smith dropping Robinson at his hotel, and driving on with Green and Brown in Brown's brougham, Smith promising to call and see Mr. Robinson at his rooms on the following morning, to inquire after his health.

We doubt if Mr. Robinson went happily to his bed. He mentally cast up his losses, and was horrified at discovering that he was minus some £3,000, and he

awoke to the unpleasant fact that if he went on at this rate he would soon arrive at the end of his legacy, so he wisely resolved to put up with his loss, and to play no more.

He slept uneasily, but after tossing about in his bed all night, he fell into a deep slumber from which, about eleven o'clock, he was awakened by a knock at his bedroom door. The waiter informed him that a gentleman named Brown wished to see him. Robinson requested he should be shown to the sitting-room, and hastily getting from his bed, slipped on his dressing-gown and slippers, and went to see him.

"Good morning, Mr. Robinson," said Brown. "You are no doubt astonished to see me so early, but—sir—but—the fact is that Mr. Smith is a d——d scoundrel, and—in short, Mr. Robinson, you have been robbed, and I've come to make a clean breast of it."

Robinson was astounded; he thought it very probable that he had been robbed, but could not understand the reference to Smith, who had been so large a loser; and he said, "How dare you speak in that way of my friend."

"Your friend," retorted Brown; "your friend, indeed! He is a thief and a scoundrel. Not content with robbing you, he has now robbed me. Your friend! He it was who picked you up in Cremorne Gardens, where he followed you from your hotel. He it was who arranged your meeting with Green and myself. He it was who got up and paid for the dinners. He it is who has pocketed all the plunder, and he now robs me of my share; and I swore to him half an hour ago I'd come and tell you all. He changed and stacked the cards when you made the first heavy loss. The fit

was sham; go to his lodging, and you'll find him with his friend Green laughing in their sleeves at you and at me. There, now, you know the whole truth."

As this history is but a dry narrative of facts, we will not stay to describe Mr. Robinson's feelings as the truth began to dawn upon his mind. He begged Brown to wait while he dressed, and, having swallowed a cup of tea, took a cab, and went to the office of his uncle's solicitor. That gentleman—an old and experienced man of the world—listened to the narrative in silence, put only a very few questions, and then said to Brown: "I believe, sir, every word you have said, and I shall advise Mr. Robinson to adopt very severe measures."

He then wrote a few lines on a sheet of paper, and presented it to Brown, saying: "Will you sign and agree to that?"

"Yes," said Brown, "I will"; and he signed a consent to be detained in a lock-up house at Mr. Robinson's pleasure, whilst inquiries were being made, so as to prevent the possibility of Smith or his agents getting at him, undertaking not to bring any action for false imprisonment. He was forthwith conducted to a celebrated sponging house in Chancery Lane, with instructions that he was not to see anyone, and that no letters were to be posted or delivered from him, and none to be received by him.

This done, Mr. Brown gave the solicitor a narrative of all the circumstances of the case. They may be shortly summarised thus:—Mr. Smith learned by a letter from his friend at Demerara that Mr. Robinson was about to sail for England to receive a large legacy, and the hotel at which he was likely to stay was men-

tioned, he having accidentally heard it in the lawyer's office. Robinson was accurately described, and the writer hoped his friend Smith would "pull off a good thing," and not forget him. Smith watched the arrival of the mail steamer, and spotted Mr. Robinson as soon as he reached his hotel.

Due notice was given to Brown and Green, and for some days Robinson was watched, without affording an opportunity for an introduction. At length the visit to Cremorne gave the long waited-for chance. Robinson was followed to the Gardens by the three confederates, and followed to town again after Mr. Smith had succeeded in getting him first to give a light to his cigar, and then, as we have seen, to go to the cigar shop in Drury Lane. Our readers will not require to be told that the subsequent treatment of Mr. Robinson was an organised scheme between the three, the object of course being plunder; and that up to a certain point all went well and smoothly; but when thieves fall out, &c., &c. So poor Mr. Robinson learned how he had been duped and robbed.

The sequel is soon told. The story was found to be strictly true, and was confirmed by a multitude of small but important circumstances. Smith and Green were arrested and taken before a magistrate, charged with conspiracy and cheating. Brown gave evidence against them, and they were fully committed for trial to the Old Bailey. At the trial, which took place at the next ensuing sessions, they were both convicted and sentenced, Smith to eighteen months' imprisonment and £1,500 fine, and Green to twelve months and £1,000 fine; and so this eventful history terminated.

NOTE.—The writer assures his readers that every word

of the above narrative is strictly true, and that the circumstances happened exactly as they have been detailed.

MORAL.—Never play cards with strangers.

WHIST SNOBS—A STORY.

BY "M."

(*From "The Westminster Papers."*)

Thackeray, Albert Smith, and Leech have described in their most telling manner snobs of many kinds. You, sir, have often depicted the Whist Snob in savage terms. Many such have I seen at home and abroad, but I met the worst specimen I have ever seen during a recent visit on the Continent. Hair well cut and oiled, dress a trifle too loud perhaps, and with a ring too many for my taste. His father was a man of wealth. My snob has always had wealth at his command. He spoke the language of the country like a native, and yet, in less than one hour, he exhibited as much bad taste as could be shown in the time. He was an Hebrew. No one doubts that a good Hebrew is a good man. No class possess more brains or use them to better effect, but success in life depends on push and energy, and this quality, so necessary in business, is exceedingly disagreeable in private life. I have no doubt but that the better class of Jews receive a more useful education than the better class of Englishmen, but unfortunately they are confined to the same school and the same class, and, I think, with fatal effect as regards their manners and customs. It is the mixture with gentlemen that is the best education at Oxford

and Cambridge. The cultivation of right feeling towards our neighbour brought out without books makes the man the gentleman, and rubs off the angles and rough edges of the uncultivated. Now, our Whist snob doubtless thinks himself a great man. Many there are that have wealth in their favour, who think that the mere possession of wealth entitles them to command. They get their own way because no one will oppose them until a rebellion takes place which overthrows their power, and which causes punishment to be inflicted on the good and bad alike. It is this which prevents many good Jews from entering a good club. It is this which prevents them entering the best circles.

However, our Whist snob enters a club by invitation for the first time. Present, the president, a gentleman in every sense of the term. Present, also, snob's introducer, a gentleman well grown in years. Present, also, three other members of the club and myself as looker on. They draw cards, and the custom of the club is that if six cut in, the two highest and two lowest play together, and the middle two sit out. The two highest and two lowest play together. My hero was one of the middle men, and I need scarcely say, after my prelude, "He would not stand that. He knew the laws of Whist, and he was not to be cut out in that way." He thus assumed that a party of gentlemen, met to play Whist, had combined to defraud him of his rights.

I know nothing more offensive than that a player, no matter how vaguely, should give vent to an expression that implies that any one else differing from the player should be a rogue, or that all the others voluntarily entered into a conspiracy to defraud him. As a

rule, if six persons are present and five agree as to what is right, the sixth is wrong. Of course, on an abstruse point of law, the sixth may be a better lawyer than the other five put together, but even so, the sixth would generally accept his fate and not make a row about it. I could not imagine that a man on his first appearance in any club would object to any club law, and if he found a law differing from ordinary laws, I should have thought that he might have inquired how it was that he was out. The president could have explained; his friend could have explained; I, the outsider, could have explained; but the worm turned, he had been trodden upon too often, and he could stand it no longer, and he therefore made an ass of himself.

To my mind there is hardly anything more painful to an Englishman than to see one of his countrymen exhibiting his bad manners in the eyes of foreigners. It is bad enough at home, but abroad one is hurt in a more tender part. If my theory is right, if this man had been to a public school, he would have learnt to hold his tongue; learnt to suffer rather than complain; learnt to believe that it was impossible for five or six gentlemen in a club-room to join together to deprive a stranger of his rights; learnt to know that any one of the five would have gladly given up his seat to the stranger if it had been possible to do so according to their law. These things are not learnt in books, nor at the school to which my hero went; or if so, he is of too pachydermatous a nature to have profited by his experience.

Unhappily the table was not broken up. Our hero grumbled and sat out, and a point of law having arisen, he volunteered to decide, and commenced talk-

ing in a loud tone of voice at the side he thought in fault. He told them they were bound by his decision. An outsider's opinion is always binding amongst gentlemen. A savage expression appeared on the face of one player, but the president intervened. He said, "We usually refer our disputes to an outsider if we cannot settle them ourselves; but if we are to appoint you judge, you should hardly express your views before we ask you."

"Oh, I always say what I think on these matters, and as I am a member of the —— Club, I suspect I know something of the laws of Whist."

I was requested to decide the point at issue, but I declined on the ground that I did not venture to differ from such an eminent authority, and the point was decided at the table as it would have been five minutes before, but for this officious interference.

The great man sat down.

"What do we play?"

Being told, "What! no more than that?"

"No; but you can bet what you like."

"Then I will bet any one £5."

Taken. He shuffles the cards.

"What poor cards you have here."

At last the display begins. Our hero trumped his partner's best card with the thirteenth trump, and lost three by cards, sat back on his chair, and said, "Ah, well, it was very lucky we did not do worse."

The next hand his adversary led a spade; second player followed suit; third hand, our hero, a club; and fourth hand wins, and leads diamond ace.

Our hero, "Excuse me; leave that down. I trumped the spade."

Answer, "Hearts are trumps."

"Oh dear no (looking at his hand), I turned up club king," and appeals to his partner, who simply said, "Hearts are trumps."

On which our hero puts his elbows on the table, and his head upon his hands, and stops to reflect. "No; that was last hand."

No notice was taken of the information given as to the club king. I turn to another hand. Hearts led; trumped by our hero; trick gathered by partner. "Stop, partner; I think I'm right. Don't turn over. Yes, quite right." His partner got in, and did not force him. He then drew his card in such a manner as to show distinctly that was not the card he wanted led.

The rubber was over, some of the players had retired, and another member or two had entered the room. Our hero immediately asked them if they would cut in?—a very polite observation. But in his politeness our hero is offensive. What had he to do with the members entering or not? Why should a perfect stranger take upon himself the ordering of the table? Why imply that he alone knew his position as a gentleman, and that the other players of the table were snobs for not asking the fresh members to come in; and why should he ask a member to come in who knew perfectly well that he could come in if he liked? Even in his polite moods he did that which no man who had been to a public school would have dreamed of doing. If there were any forgetfulness on the part of a member of the table, he could have asked the president *sotto voce* if those gentlemen desired to enter. Soon after at the

end of a hand, two trumps in different opponents' hands, my hero led a thirteenth card. Second hand discarded—last hand trumped. (To his partner)—"That was a capital thirteenth card I led you—I think it saved the game." He is fond of thirteenth cards, for the next hand he led another. At the end of the hand, "I wanted your best trump."

"But what was the good of that? My best trump must make."

"Yes, but my trump was the next best, and we separated them."

He appealed to me, and I replied, "If your trump had been the second best, of course you were right, but it was not." On which he contradicted me flatly, and then looked at the cards and said, "Oh, yes, you are right."

I cannot recall all the phrases used, but I remember, "You ought to have led your king first from ace, king."

Reply: "I had not ace, king."

"I made the trick entirely by doing that."

"Excuse me, it was not the game."

"You spoilt the game by leading the knave when you knew I had ace, king."

Answer: "But I did not know you had ace, king; and if I had, I do not see the point of not leading the knave. You had no right to put your cards down."

We must stop. Each of these remarks was calculated to produce a row and a wrangle, and it says something for the temper of the players that they did not exhibit any signs of impatience. I had heard more than enough, and I left the room. I noticed that the table was shortly broken up, and I was not

surprised. Behaviour such as I have described would be unbearable anywhere; but to see an Englishman abroad say and do such things is sufficient to make one ashamed of one's race.

I give you my word that I have not invented a particle of this. I have set down naught in malice. I describe exactly what was said and done. I made notes of the facts at the time, and I determined, if I could not get some one else to do it, to write to you myself, in order that one man may show to the rest of the world nearly every offence that can be committed at the Whist table. That the man is an Englishman I regret. That he is a Jew I regret, for some of my best friends are of the race; but, at the risk of giving offence I write this as a warning in various ways to those who desire to play Whist as "A Fine Art."

THE WHIST-PLAYER'S DREAM.

(*A Letter to the Editor of "The Westminster Papers."*)

Mr. Editor,—I have no doubt that, in common with other editors, you, in your editorial capacity, think Christmas a great nuisance. It has become an unalterable law that a multitude of periodicals, and a great many of newspapers, should disport themselves in motley at this season. All the nonsense and imbecility that have been floating about during the year, too utterly bad for insertion in any magazine, is now collected by enterprising publishers, packed together anyhow, and the result is called a Christmas number. You, sir, with the scientific nature of your publication, doubtless

thought to escape this penalty. But it is useless; and knowing that your regular staff is inadequate for this occasion; that your solemn Chess wiseacres, your flippant Whist writers, and the poor creature you call your Dramatic critic are of no service to you in this emergency, I step in as a *Deus ex machina*, and provide you with a dream that visited me last Christmas, when I was staying, lonely and wretched, in chambers in London.

It was on Christmas eve that, mournfully bewailing my unhappy lot, I slowly bent my steps to the grimy chambers I called my home. I had been playing Whist at the club, with my usual fortune, and had lost more than I could well afford. I began, too, to think that I should never become even a decent player. I recollected that my partners always wore a gloomily resigned expression of countenance, whilst a covertly exultant smile reigned on the faces of my adversaries. These melancholy meditations occupied my mind as I mounted the dingy staircase of Thieves' Inn, and entered my cheerless den, where I immediately threw myself into an easy chair, and, filling my favourite clay with Cavendish, sought to smoke myself into a more congenial frame of mind.

Methought, as I dreamily sat and watched the thick rings of smoke, that the room gradually grew alive with what, to me, seemed indistinct shapes, and a muttered hum of voices sounded in my ears. I suddenly lost all power of motion, and watched the movements of my spectral visitors with no surprise, but with a lazy interest. At length one singled himself out from the rest and approached me. He was dressed in a mortal's garments, of a seedy appearance, and a

strong flavour of French brandy and German cigars accompanied his approach. Thus he spake:—

"I was the man who would not lead from five trumps. In expiation of this unspeakable offence I am condemned to haunt the earth with five thousand other ghosts of good family. It has been calculated that the money lost by this method of play would be more than enough to supply suffragan bishops in every diocese (which God forbid). This is mere nonsense. To lead from five trumps is folly, and, seeing as I see now, I would do as I did before, if I were alive again. Five trumps in one's hand is a sight worthy of the gods, and should never be separated. Farewell, brother."

With a somewhat sneering emphasis on this last word, this weak-minded ghost glided back into the mist. His place was taken by a portly and jolly-looking ghost, who might, in his lifetime, have been a country squire or rural dean. He plunged at once into the subject and addressed me as follows:—"I was what is rudely called the old-fashioned player. I led from a single card whenever I was lucky enough to get one; I always went for making trumps, and therefore forced my partner on every possible occasion. It pleases me to see you following in my footsteps, and I maintain, sir, that this is the only true play; and I say, sir, that the upstarts of the present day will soon——." Here this worthy ghost waxed extremely angry, which somewhat surprised me, as, though I had read of all manner of ghosts, I had no recollection of one with a bad temper. He was about to proceed in this violent strain (I fancy the sight of my clay angered him), when he was unceremoniously pulled back, and a pompous ghost, of a starched and disagreeable, not to say priggish,

aspect, stepped into his place and thus accosted me: "Heed not, young man, the senile utterances of that effete old ghost; for though you truly resemble him in some points, I am pleased to see that your style of play is more nearly allied to mine, which is the only regular method, though much abused and misunderstood. When I had decided on my line of play nothing would induce me to alter it. The position of the cards was nothing to me. I stuck to my text, and never changed my tactics. The fickle player who is always reasoning about the fall of the cards is a dangerous lunatic. Avoid his style as you would the devil." But by this time the inflated language of this ghost was becoming too much for me, and I puffed a large volume of smoke in his face, which sent him flying. In his place there slowly advanced a pale-faced, hollow-eyed spectre, who in mournful accents spoke as follows: "Believe not, frail mortal, in vain systems: what avails knowledge or experience? Put your trust only in what your age irreverently calls superstition. Mark well the winning seats, the winning cards, and the winning players. Should fortune frown, turn round your chair three times, muttering an incantation the while. Never omit to tap the black deuce. If out of luck, sit cross-legged. Beware of the nine of diamonds, and, most of all, never, ah! never play after a fish dinner." He vanished, and there tripped into the arena, smilingly, a young lady ghost. "My dear," said she, "never mind those old frights. When I was on earth I nearly always won at Whist; and when I lost I did not pay. I always played out my aces and court cards. The little rubbishing cards I threw down anyhow. I always kept my trumps till the end. If I had a young man for my

adversary I made eyes at him; if an old frump, I fidgeted and made him angry." As she concluded, the previous ghosts again came forward, and all joining hands, they cried with one voice, "Hail to thee, brother. We see in thee combined all our various styles; thou shalt be one of us in time. Till then, farewell."

I awoke, and, lo! it was a dream. But the coarse and indecent behaviour of these spectral visitants, instead of having the effect they desired, only produced in my mind a feeling of irritation and disgust. Firmly resolved never to form one of such a disreputable company, I devoted myself to the study of Whist. I know by heart Clay, "Cam," and "Cavendish." I have studied "The Westminster Papers," more especially the maxims of the Roarer (which I think admirable), and the result is that I am now a fine player, and have twice in the last twelve months seen my partner's "Blue Peter." This perspicacity on my part caused me so much delight that I exclaimed on each occasion, "All right, partner, I will recollect." I am now engaged in the invention of a signal for not leading trumps, which will, I think, be a grand discovery. May I count, sir, on your assistance in this matter, as I fancy our styles of play are somewhat allied.

Yours,

SIMPLE SIMON.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON III. AND LORD LYTTON AS WHIST-PLAYERS.

There was something fascinating in these two great men—the Emperor and Lord Lytton. Each were

Whist-players, although neither of them were in the first rank. It is known to most of us that early in life the former gambled to a considerable extent, and it would be natural to assume that he who gambled for such high stakes in the political world would not be contented with small stakes in the card world.

Throughout life he enjoyed his rubber. Whilst young, he was bold even to rashness, as many of the French school are, and later on the characteristics that marked his career in the political world were shown with exactness in his Whist. He never seemed to know his own mind. The scheme of the game with which he started he failed to carry out. We know little or nothing of the first Napoleon's Whist. We do know something of his Chess. The same tactics that he employed on the field of battle he used over the Chess-board. His attack was concentrated on one point, and every piece was sacrificed to attain his end. But there were no reserves, and no road for retreat. It was victory or death. The character of the man was exhibited in his Chess, as the character of the last Napoleon was shown in his Whist. An over-stubborn player is a bad player, but the man who will not work out his ideas, but turns aside from too slight a cause, and changes his tactics, is often the worse player of the two. This was the Emperor's defect. He changed his suit when his only chance of safety rested in sticking to one. This is not the time or place to speak of his defects; suffice it to say that all his faults, and many they were, may be forgotten, if only for the constancy that he exhibited to every one, were he high or low, that ever did a kind action for him or his. The

most trivial act was repaid a hundredfold, and an offence was forgiven, not seven times, but seventy times seven.

Of Lord Lytton, we would speak rather of his writings than of his play. There is little to be said about him. He was a good player, and nothing more. The majority of Whist-players early reach the same stage of excellence, which is only passed by those who have a natural genius for the game, and this genius Lord Lytton had not. He could scarcely be considered an enthusiast for the game, as more than once he gave up his practice for several years together, only resuming the pursuit when, as occurred to him on two or three occasions, his pet physician of the hour recommended Whist as likely tc be beneficial to his health. At these times he was a constant player at the "Portland," and he occasionally made up pleasant Whist parties at Knebworth.

He was exceedingly slow in his play, and at times he appeared absent, and unable to concentrate his thoughts on the matter before him. Yet after one of these reveries he seemed to be able to recall all that for the moment he had lost. One can easily imagine that such a mind had many more pleasant creatures of the fancy in his brain than ordinary mortals. He was deaf, and we generally find that deaf people are more attentive Whist-players than others, and this is doubtless owing to the fact that their minds are not so easily diverted.

His defect in Whist was want of perception, or lack of power to draw correct inferences from the fall of the cards, for, although he could play Double Dummy well, at Whist he did not seem to take the full advan-

tage of the position of the cards when they were presumably known to him.

With such a mind, with so much study and practice with the best players, it is strange that Lord Lytton, who did everything else well, and who so nearly climbed to the top round of the ladder in every walk of life, should have failed to reach eminence in Whist; but without doubt so it was, and we cannot account for the fact unless it be that he, in common with all Whist-players, neglected to put down the hands that he had played.

This means of self-examination is too irksome for the generality of men, and we believe players stand still or retrograde in their style because they will not examine the positions for themselves. It is a circumstance much to be deplored that we have so few games of our great men recorded. The trouble of putting up a hand is much less than putting down a game of Chess, and the memory necessary for the purpose can be acquired by any one with a little practice, and we believe there is no better method than this for a young player to teach himself the game thoroughly.

We would rather turn from the Whist-player, and let Lord Lytton speak for himself as a writer. In the best novel that ever was written—we speak with all humility, and without the fear of the critic before our eyes—in "My Novel," there is a charming description of a Whist scene. Each of the players—the Squire and Mrs. Hazeldean and Parson Dale—appear to us living characters. We seem to know them as personal friends.

We have had friends in the little children of other

authors, but we can never recall the grown-up friends of any other man's creation as vividly as the characters in this book. But let the author speak for himself. It is the only tribute that we can pay to the memory of him who gave us more pleasure as a novelist than any other writer, living or dead.

"But see, Captain Barnabas, fortified by his fourth cup of tea, has at length summoned courage to whisper to Mrs. Hazeldean, 'Don't you think the Parson will be impatient for his rubber?' Mrs. Hazeldean glanced at the Parson, and smiled; but she gave the signal to the Captain, and the bell was rung, lights were brought in, the curtains let down; in a few moments more the group had collected round the card-table. The best of us are but human—that is not a new truth, I confess, but yet people forget it every day of their lives—and I daresay there are many who are charitably thinking at this very moment that my Parson ought not to be playing at Whist. All I can say to those rigid disciplinarians is, 'Every man has his favourite sin; Whist was Parson Dale's!—ladies and gentlemen, what is yours?' In truth, I must not set up my poor Parson nowadays as a pattern parson—it is enough to have one pattern in a village no bigger than Hazeldean, and we all know that Lenny Fairfield has bespoken that place, and got the patronage of the stocks for his emoluments! Parson Dale was ordained, not indeed so very long ago, but still at a time when churchmen took it a great deal more easily than they do now. The elderly parson of that day played his rubber as a matter of course, the middle-aged parson was sometimes seen riding to cover (I knew a schoolmaster, a doctor of divinity, and an excellent man, whose pupils were

chiefly taken from the highest families in England, who hunted regularly three times a week during the season), and the young parson would often sing a capital song—not composed by David—and join in those rotatory dances, which certainly David never danced before the ark.

"Does it need so long an exordium to excuse thee, poor Parson Dale, for turning up that ace of spades with so triumphant a smile at thy partner? I must own that nothing which could well add to the Parson's offence was wanting. In the first place, he did not play charitably, and merely to oblige other people. He delighted in the game—he rejoiced in the game—his whole heart was in the game—neither was he indifferent to the mammon of the thing, as a Christian pastor ought to have been. He looked very sad when he took his shillings out of his purse, and exceedingly pleased when he put the shillings, that had just before belonged to other people, into it. Finally, by one of those arrangements common with married people who play at the same table, Mr. and Mrs. Hazeldean were invariably partners, and no two people could play worse; while Captain Barnabas, who had played at Graham's with honour and profit, necessarily became partner to Parson Dale, who himself played a good, steady, parsonic game. So that, in strict truth, it was hardly fair—it was almost swindling—the combination of these two great dons against that innocent married couple! Mr. Dale, it is true, was aware of this disproportion of force, and had often proposed either to change partners or to give odds—propositions always scornfully scouted by the Squire and his lady, so that the Parson was obliged to pocket his conscience, to-

gether with the ten points which made his average winnings.

"The strangest thing in the world is the different way in which Whist affects the temper. It is no test of temper, as some pretend—not at all! The best-tempered people in the world grow snappish at Whist; and I have seen the most testy and peevish in the ordinary affairs of life bear their losses with the stoicism of Epictetus. This was notably manifested in the contrast between the present adversaries of the Hall and the Rectory. The Squire, who was esteemed as choleric a gentleman as most in the county, was the best-humoured fellow you could imagine when you set him down to Whist opposite the sunny face of his wife. You never heard one of those incorrigible blunderers scold each other; on the contrary, they only laughed when they threw away the game, with four by honours in their hands. The utmost that was ever said was a 'Well, Harry, that was the oddest trump of yours. Ho—ho—ho!' or 'Bless me, Hazeldean—why, they made three tricks in clubs, and you had the ace in your hand all the time! Ha—ha—ha!'

"Upon which occasions Captain Barnabas, with great good humour, always echoed both the Squire's Ho—ho—ho! and Mrs. Hazeldean's Ha—ha—ha!

"Not so the Parson. He had so keen and sportsmanlike an interest in the game, that even his adversaries' mistakes ruffled him. And you would hear him, with elevated voice and agitated gestures, laying down the law, quoting Hoyle, appealing to all the powers of memory and common-sense against the very delinquencies by which he was enriched—a waste of elo-

quence that always heightened the hilarity of Mr. and Mrs. Hazeldean.

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"*Miss Jemima.* It is only those horrid men who think of money as a source of happiness. I should be the last person to esteem a gentleman less because he was poor.

"*Mrs. Dale.* I wonder the Squire does not ask Signor Riccabocca here more often. Such an acquisition *we* find him.

"The Squire's voice from the card-table.—'Whom ought I to ask more often, Mrs. Dale?'

"Parson's voice, impatiently.—'Come—come—come, Squire; play to my queen of diamonds—do!'

"*Squire.* There, I trump it—pick up the trick, Mrs. H.

"*Parson.* Stop! stop! trump my diamond?

"*The Captain* (solemnly). Trick turned; play on, Squire.

"*Squire.* The king of diamonds.

"*Mrs. Hazeldean.* Lord! Hazeldean; why, that's the most barefaced revoke—ha—ha—ha! trump the queen of diamonds and play out the king! well I never—ha—ha—ha!

"*Captain Barnabas* (in tenor). Ha, ha, ha!

"*Squire.* Ho—ho—ho! bless my soul; ho, ho, ho!

"*Captain Barnabas* (in bass). Ho—ho—ho!

"Parson's voice raised, but drowned by the laughter of his adversaries and the firm, clear tone of Captain Barnabas—'Three to our score!—game!'

"*Squire* (wiping his eyes). No help for it, Harry—deal for me! Whom ought I to ask, Mrs. Dale?

(waxing angry). First time I ever heard the hospitality of Hazeldean called in question!

"*Mrs. Dale.* My dear sir, I beg a thousand pardons, but listeners—you know the proverb.

"*Squire* (growling like a bear). I hear nothing but proverbs ever since we had that Mounseer among us. Please to speak plainly, ma'am.

"*Mrs. Dale* (sliding into a little temper at being thus roughly accosted). It was of Mounseer, as you call him, that I spoke, Mr. Hazeldean.

"*Squire.* What! Rickeybockey?

"*Mrs. Dale* (attempting the pure Italian accentuation). Signor Riccabocca.

"*Parson* (slapping his cards on the table in despair). Are we playing at Whist, or are we not?

"The Squire, who is fourth player, drops the king to Captain Higginbotham's lead of the ace of hearts. Now the Captain has left queen, knave, and two other hearts—four trumps to the queen, and nothing to win a trick with in the two other suits. This hand is therefore precisely one of those in which, especially after the fall of that king of hearts in the adversaries' hand, it becomes a matter of reasonable doubt whether to lead trumps or not. The Captain hesitates, and, not liking to play out his good hearts with the certainty of their being trumped by the Squire, nor, on the other hand, liking to open the other suits, in which he has not a card that can assist his partner, resolves, as becomes a military man in such dilemma, to make a bold push and lead out trumps, on the chance of finding his partner strong, and so bringing in his long suit.

"*Squire* (taking advantage of the much meditating pause made by the Captain). Mrs. Dale, it is not my

fault. I have asked Rickeybockey—time out of mind. But I suppose I am not fine enough for those foreign chaps. He'll not come—that's all I know.

"*Parson* (aghast at seeing the Captain play out trumps, of which he, Mr. Dale, has only two, wherewith he expects to ruff the suit of spades, of which he has only one—the cards all falling in suits—while he has not a single other chance of a trick in his hand). Really, Squire, we had better give up playing, if you put out my partner in this extraordinary way—jabber—jabber—jabber!

"*Squire.* Well, we must be good children, Harry. What!—trumps, Barney? Thank ye for that! And the Squire might well be grateful, for the unfortunate adversary has led up to ace, king, knave, with two other trumps. Squire takes the Parson's ten with his knave, and plays out ace, king; then, having cleared all the trumps except the Captain's queen and his own remaining two, leads off tierce major in that very suit of spades of which the Parson has only one—and the Captain, indeed, but two—forces out the Captain's queen, and wins the game in a canter.

"*Parson* (with a look at the Captain which might have become the awful brows of Jove, when about to thunder). That, I suppose, is the new-fashioned London play! In my time the rule was, 'First save the game, then try to win it.'

"*Captain.* Could not save it, sir.

"*Parson* (exploding). Not save it!—two ruffs in my own hand—two tricks certain till you took them out! Monstrous! The rashest trump.—Seizes the cards—spreads them on the table, lip quivering, hands trembling—tries to show how five tricks could have

been gained—(N.B. It is *Short* Whist, which Captain Barnabas had introduced at the Hall) can't make out more than four—Captain smiles triumphantly—Parson in a passion, and not at all convinced, mixes all the cards together again, and, falling back in his chair, groans, with tears in his voice—'The cruelest trump! the most wanton cruelty!'

"The Hazeldeans in chorus. 'Ho—ho—ho! Ha—ha—ha!'

"The Captain, who does not laugh this time, and whose turn it is to deal, shuffles the cards for the conquering game of the rubber with as much caution and prolixity as Fabius might have employed in posting his men.

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"*Parson* (thrumming on the table with great impatience).—Old fiddledee!—talking of old families when the cards have been shuffled this half-hour?

"*Captain Barnabas.* Will you cut for your partner, ma'am?

"*Squire* (who has been listening to Frank's inquiries with a musing air).—Why do you want to know the distance to Rood Hall?

"*Frank* (rather hesitatingly). — Because Randal Leslie is there for the holidays, sir.

"*Parson.* Your wife has cut for you, Mr. Hazeldean. I don't think it was quite fair; and my partner has turned up a deuce—deuce of hearts. Please to come and play, if you *mean* to play.

"The Squire returns to the table, and in a few minutes the game is decided by a dexterous finesse of the Captain against the Hazeldeans. The clock strikes

ten; the servants enter with a tray; the Squire counts up his own and his wife's losings; and the Captain and Parson divide sixteen shillings between them.

"*Squire.* There, Parson, I hope now you'll be in a better humour. You win enough out of us to set up a coach-and-four.

"'Tut!' muttered the Parson; 'at the end of the year, I'm not a penny the richer for it all."

"And, indeed, monstrous as the assertion seemed, it was perfectly true, for the Parson portioned out his gains into three divisions. One-third he gave to Mrs. Dale, for her own special pocket-money; what became of his second third he never owned even to his better half; but certain it was, that every time the Parson won seven-and-sixpence, half-a-crown, which nobody could account for, found its way to the poor-box; while the remaining third the Parson, it is true, openly and avowedly retained; but I have no manner of doubt that, at the year's end, it got to the poor quite as safely as if it had been put into the box.

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"Mr. Dale moved on; but as he passed Captain Barnabas, the benignant character of his countenance changed sadly.

"'The cruelest trump, Captain Higginbotham!' said he sternly, and stalked by—majestic."

DISRAELI ON WHIST.

AN ACCOUNT OF TIRESIAS AT HIS RUBBER.

From the Story of "The Infernal Marriage."

Travellers who have left their homes generally grow mournful as the evening draws on; nor is there, perhaps, any time at which the pensive influence of twilight is more predominant than on the eve that follows a separation from those we love. Imagine, then, the feelings of the Queen of Hell as her barque entered the very region of that mystic light, and the shadowy shores of the realm of Twilight opened before her. Her thoughts reverted to Pluto; and she mused over all his fondness, all his adoration, and all his indulgence, and the infinite solicitude of his affectionate heart, until the tears trickled down her beautiful cheeks, and she marvelled she ever could have quitted the arms of her lover.

"Your Majesty," observed Manto, who had been whispering to Tiresias, "feels, perhaps, a little wearied?"

"By no means, my kind Manto," replied Proserpine, starting from reverie. "But the truth is, my spirits are very unequal; and though I really cannot well fix upon the cause of their present depression, I am apparently not free from the contagion of the surrounding gloom."

"It is the evening air," said Tiresias. "Your Majesty had, perhaps, better re-enter the pavilion of the yacht. As for myself, I never venture about after sunset. One

grows romantic. Night was evidently made for indoor nature. I propose a rubber."

To this popular suggestion Proserpine was pleased to accede, and herself and Tiresias, Manto and the Captain of the yacht, were soon engaged at the proposed amusement.

Tiresias loved a rubber. It was true he was blind, but then, being a prophet, that did not signify. Tiresias, I say, loved a rubber, and was a first-rate player, though, perhaps, given a little too much to *finesse*. Indeed, he so much enjoyed taking in his fellow-creatures, that he sometimes could not resist deceiving his own partner. Whist is a game which requires no ordinary combination of qualities; at the same time, memory and invention, a daring fancy, and a cool head. To a mind like that of Tiresias a pack of cards was full of human nature. A rubber was a microcosm; and he ruffed his adversary's king, or brought in a long suit of his own with as much dexterity and as much enjoyment as, in the real business of existence, he dethroned a monarch, or introduced a dynasty.

"Will your Majesty be pleased to draw your card," requested the sage. "If I might venture to offer your Majesty a hint, I would dare to recommend your Majesty not to play before your turn. My friends are fond of ascribing my success in my various missions to the possession of peculiar qualities. No such thing: I owe everything to the simple habit of always waiting till it is my turn to speak. And, believe me, that he who plays before his turn at Whist, commits as great a blunder as he who speaks before his turn during a negotiation."

"The trick, and two by honours," said Proserpine.

"Pray, my dear Tiresias, you who are such a fine player, how came you to trump my best card?"

"Because I wanted the lead. And those who want to lead, please your Majesty, must never hesitate about sacrificing their friends."

"I believe you speak truly. I was right in playing that thirteenth card?"

"Quite so. Above all things, I love a thirteenth card. I send it forth, like a mock project in a revolution, to try the strength of parties."

"You should not have forced me, Lady Manto," said the Captain of the yacht, in a grumbling tone, to his partner. "By weakening me, you prevent me bringing in my spades. We might have made the game."

"You should not have been forced," said Tiresias. "If she made a mistake, who was unacquainted with your plans, what a terrible blunder you committed to share her error without her ignorance!"

"What, then, was I to lose a trick?"

"Next to knowing when to seize an opportunity," replied Tiresias, "the most important thing in life is to know when to forego an advantage."

"I have cut you an honour, sir," said Manto.

"Which reminds me," replied Tiresias; "that, in the last hand, your Majesty unfortunately forgot to lead through your adversary's ace. I have often observed that nothing ever perplexes an adversary so much as an appeal to his honour."

"I will not forget to follow your advice," said the Captain of the yacht, playing accordingly.

"By which you have lost the game," quickly remarked Tiresias. "There are exceptions to all rules,

but it seldom answers to follow the advice of an opponent."

"Confusion!" exclaimed the Captain of the yacht.

"Four by honours, and the trick, I declare," said Proserpine. "I was so glad to see you turn up the queen, Tiresias."

"I also, madam. Without doubt there are few cards better than her royal consort, or, still more, the imperial ace. Nevertheless, I must confess, I am perfectly satisfied whenever I remember that I have the Queen on my side."

Proserpine bowed.

"PLAY OR PAY."

BY HAWLEY SMART.

The Thermopolium undoubtedly liked its Whist stiff and its Pool high. There was not, perhaps, a great deal of harm done at the latter; men discover somehow they cannot play Pool so very much sooner than that they cannot play Whist. Belief in this latter accomplishment is one of the most extraordinary hallucinations to which civilised man is liable; and those who, playing a very moderate neophyte's rubber, are imbued with the idea that they are past masters, is beyond all belief. It is always the cards, their luck, or their partner's woful incapacity, but never their own. When you content yourself with shillings and half-crowns, this overweening confidence does not much matter; but when you come to sovereign points and five on the

rubber, or to "fives and ponies," as it is pithily called, it is unfortunate, and productive of much grief, should it prove misplaced.

Now Bertie played an average regimental rubber, and was rather fond of one at modest points; but he never thought of playing at the Thermopolium. Whist was all very well to kill time after dinner in country quarters, but in London there were theatres and plenty of other ways of passing the evening.

You cannot smoke and drink coffee all night; and at the end of half an hour Bertie thought he would go to the billiard and card-room flat, and see what was doing. He lounged into the Pool-room, and found that amusement in full bloom. Crown lives, when half the players seldom miss a fair chance, and have very competent ideas of playing for safety to boot, is a game at which it is possible to fritter away a good many sovereigns in the evening, if you are not of equal calibre; and Bertie sagaciously decided that those employed in the diversion were rather too good for him. He looked on for a little, and then sauntered off to the card-room.

"How are you, Bazing?" exclaimed a stout, florid man on his entrance. "You are a perfect godsend; we are waiting for a fourth. Haven't seen you since you gave us such a slating six months back. Come and cut in? Those two tables are full, and we want to make up a third. Hamilton and Cottrell will be back in half an hour, and then we shall be all right."

Now, unluckily for Bertie, he had played one night in the last Derby week—men do wild things during that festival: cards had been kind to him; he had risen a winner of some seventy or eighty pounds, and the

principal sufferer had been the man who now addressed him. He didn't quite like to say no, albeit he had not the slightest intention of playing when he entered the room.

"Well, you fellows play higher than I care about," he rejoined. "But just for a round till the others come, I don't mind."

It is rather curious, but—and I fancy those who have played will endorse the statement—when you rather force a man into joining in the game, he usually is vouchsafed great luck; the gods are generally kind to him at the outset, whatever they may prove in the sequel. Bertie and his partner won the *partie*, and nobody else turning up as yet, he had no choice but to continue. His success in the Derby week had been brought about much in the same fashion; and though he had embarked in Whist reluctantly on this occasion, as on that—nobody ever was proof against the fascination of winning—Bertie began to think Whist, even if it was stiffish, was a very sensible way of getting through an evening; and when Messrs. Hamilton and Cottrell eventually turned up, he showed no disposition to abandon his game, but continued to bet when he cut out, and to cut in when his turn came, like any hardened *habitué* of that softly-lit apartment. It is true that when he jumped into his bath the next morning, he mused somewhat moodily over the events of the preceding evening; for Fortune had turned her back upon him about midnight, and when he walked home about half-past three, he was a loser of one hundred and thirty-seven pounds.

"Yes," he muttered, as he plied his hair-brushes energetically, "I'd better have kept out of it; all

comes of my d—d good-nature, helping to make up a table. Well, I'm in for it now; I must play Whist to-night. I'll be shot if I leave the price of a horse behind me without another shy for it. I'd cruel bad luck last night, or else those fellows don't play better than me, that I can see."

No, they never do see it; and I can recollect being witness of a provincial lady's exhortation to one of the past masters of *the* table at the Turf Club, not to be alarmed about cutting in—"they didn't play so very well." That veteran of the green cloth's face was a study; he shuddered slightly as he once more begged to be excused. I can fancy his horror of being involved in such a rubber, and his silent ejaculation, "Do they really call this Whist?" He gave the card-table a wide berth for the remainder of his visit, and dedicated himself to conversation and photograph-books at the further end of the drawing-room with laudable pertinacity.

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After dinner on the second day he of course ascended to the card-room, and sat down with serious intention of getting back his losses of the preceding night. Now, though Bazing was undoubtedly the weakest player of the set, it was not altogether that; luck comes at times in terrible runs, and Bertie had struck a vein of ill-fortune as prolific to his antagonists as the famous Comstock mine. It did not matter with whom he played; it was no question of play. Against Bazing and his partner, let him be whom he might, the cards not only ran steadily, but, if I may be allowed the expression, raged furiously; and when the party finally broke up, Bertie's attempts at recuperating himself had

resulted in the dropping of another two hundred and twenty. The recovery of our lost moneys often ends in wailing and bitterness.

"I've been an ass to begin," he observed confidentially to his looking-glass; "but I'll see it out now. I'll either have back what I've lost—that is, most of it, at all events—or they may take the remainder of aunt Sophie's legacy."

* * * * * *

Bertie lounges into the card-room about ten, and becomes speedily once more immersed in his Whist tournament. He plays at first with in and out luck. If he wins some forty pounds or so on this rubber, it is only to lose it on the next. He feels a little chafed at this want of result, which simply shows how bad a gambler he really is for one thing, and that it is no love of the game, but simply the lust of play, that possesses him. Things continue to go on in this see-saw fashion till past midnight, when a pale, languid young man enters the room, and lounging up to the table proceeds at once to bet upon the game. Bertie just glances at him, but as it is no acquaintance of his, once more turns his attention to his cards. The rubber comes off in Bazing's favour, and the newcomer, who has backed that side, sweeps up his winnings with a nonchalent smile.

Bertie, as it chanced, not only cut in again, but with Toad Richardson as his partner. He had a fair hand, and, without feeling unduly sanguine, thought if his *vis-d-vis* was about as good as himself they should make a fair fight for the trick. In the second round the Toad asked for trumps; that is to say, for the benefit of the uninitiated, having played the seven of spades

in the first round, he now discarded the five of that suit, which is recognised at Whist as telling your partner to lead the trump suit, should he get the opportunity. A little later, and Bertie, having obtained the lead, promptly responded to his partner's call and played a small diamond; but to the astonishment of the whole table, the Toad blandly discarded a club.

"No trump, partner?" inquired Bazing.

"No trump," replied Richardson, with preternatural gravity.

Another round, and the third hand, who has ruffed the king of hearts, is somewhat astonished at being overtrumped. Bertie, who has a considerable stake on the game, although tolerably cool, cannot repress a half ejaculation of astonishment, while his adversaries exchange meaning looks and note the trick with peculiar attention. The Toad alone plays on with undisturbed serenity.

"Three cards and two by honours—game," remarks Richardson blandly, as the last trick is gathered. "You'll have the long odds in fives, I suppose, Flaxman?"

"Certainly; but you'd better wait till you've won the game; as it is, you've revoked, and we mean scoring three, which make us three to your four. You can't call game, remember, under these circumstances."

"I revoked?" inquired Richardson, with much incredulity.

"Yes; with five trumps, including two honours, you renounced them the first time they were led"; and as he spoke Flaxman turned up the fatal trick. "That's right, Bazing, is it not?"

"I'm afraid so; and, hang it all, you asked for trumps."

"I am not aware of it," replied the Toad, with much stateliness.

"Why you dropped the seven before the five of spades; see;" and Bertie displayed the two tricks on the table.

"Did I? perhaps so. I don't pay much attention to those little devils as a rule."

A titter went round the table; the jest was excellent to every one but poor Bertie, and amused the lookers-on.

"But when I asked you particularly 'No trumps,' you said none."

"That's where you put your foot in it," replied the Toad gravely. "It ought to be a lesson to you in future. Why the deuce couldn't you say '*No diamonds*, partner,' and then I should have known all about it?"

A NOTE ON "LEADS."

The following, from the pen of "Cavendish," appeared in the *Field*:—

"One would suppose that scarcely anything fresh could be said about leads at this period of the existence of Whist; all the various leads having been worked out, and the results given in printed tables.

"The first lead to which I would draw attention is that from ace, king, queen, knave. The lead usually given in the books is king, then queen in plain suits; knave, then queen in trumps.

"Now in the case of the plain suit lead, if it is trumped, or not persevered with after the second round, partners know nothing of the position of the knave. By leading first king and then knave, he learns the position of the queen as well as of the ace, and is thus informed of one more card in the leader's hand.

"King, then knave, is also led by some players from tierce to a king and one small card. But this ought not to be done, as the lead of the queen after the king equally gives the position of the knave; for if knave were not in the leader's hand he would continue with a small one.

"There is no mistaking the lead of king, then knave. It must be from a quart major; turn it about how you will, you can make nothing else of it; and by adopting this way of leading, partner is informed of one more card in the hand of the second round than by the ordinary method.

"Of course, I am referring to original leads only. When the hand has advanced, king, knave may be led as strengthening cards. A similar remark applies to almost every book lead.

"I would not advise anyone to try the experiment of king, then knave, except with a good *vis-à-vis*, unless he particularly wants the knave trumped by his partner.

"In trumps, the best way of leading from a quart major is knave, then ace. The lead of the knave, which wins, enables partner to put king, queen in the leader's hand; the lead of the ace completes the information. The reason the knave is not the best card to lead first in plain suits is that it may be trumped the first round, and the leader's partner cannot tell

whether the lead is from quart major, tierce to a king, or tierce to a knave. Also ace is sometimes held up in trumps, but rarely in plain suits; consequently knave of trumps, followed by queen, both being suffered to win, does not show four by honours so conclusively as knave, then ace. From a quint major in trumps lead ten, then ace.

"The usual lead from ace, queen, knave, ten, is ace, then queen. This, however, is wrong, as it is not the game for the partner to put king or queen led after ace, he having king and two small ones originally.* He therefore blocks the suit on the third round. The proper lead from ace, queen, knave, ten, with or without small ones, is ace, then ten. The same in trumps with a good partner, but not with an indifferent one. In trumps, the ten is led merely to give information as to the other two cards held by the leader, and not to get king played on ten, as the trump suit cannot be blocked. If ace, then queen is led from ace, queen, knave, and ace, then ten from ace, queen, knave, ten, it follows that the leader of ace, then queen, cannot hold the ten.

"The partner of the player who leads ace, then, in plain suits should put the king on the ten if he had but three originally, but not if he had four, as with four he can get out of the leader's way on the third round. Hence, by leading in the way proposed, the third player's hand, *quoad* the number he has of the suit led, can be counted whenever he has the king, if the proposed lead is made, but not if the ordinary lead is made.

* "We do not agree," says the Editor of "The Westminste Papers."

"From queen, knave, ten, &c., the recognised lead is queen, then knave. This is undoubtedly right, if the tierce is accompanied by only one small card; but from queen, knave, ten, and more than one small card, I contend that the lead should be queen, then ten. The reason is clear. If the leader's partner has the king (ace having come out first round), or ace (king having similarly come out), his play is directed by the lead of the ten. For he certainly will not put his ace or king on the knave, lead in the second round; but he would put it on the ten, if he had only the honour and one small card of the suit remaining, his object being to get rid of the command of the suit of which his partner held originally queen, knave, ten, and at least two small ones.

"The collateral advantage of leading as proposed is, that it enables the partners to count each other's hands. Queen, followed by knave, indicates a lead from a suit of four cards, one of which is the ten. Queen, followed by ten, similarly indicates a lead from a suit of more than four cards, one of them being the knave. Also, the play of the leader's partner enables his hand to be counted, king or ace put on ten showing that he could only have held, at most, three of the suit originally, ten winning the trick, showing that the leader's partner has king or ace, and that he held at least four originally.

"In short, this lead is only the principle commonly applied to king, queen, knave, and one small one, and king, queen, knave, and more than one small one, carried a step further down."

SATIRICAL RULES AND CRITICISMS ON WHIST.

BY THE "ROARER."

When your partner leads trumps and you are strong in that suit, never return the lead. What is the good? If he is strong, he must make his trumps; and if he is weak, it only smashes up your hand.

Always scold your partner at the end of every hand. It may put him out, and it is 2 to 1 against his being your partner next time.

In finding fault with the play, always found your remarks on the result. It is the only certain system. All theories are humbug. It is the result I like to go by.

When you want two tricks only to make the game, and your partner leads the best of a suit of which you have second best, always throw it away; it may stop your partner's suit. As a matter of experience, I find when my partner has all the suit except two, and I have the second best and a little one, I generally keep the best, but then this is his stupidity, because if he led his smallest, and I win, if it suited me, I should return his lead; and a man of my experience generally knows, when there are four of a suit left in, and neither of our opponents follow suit, that my partner must have them. Memorandum: On this point recollect you may have forgotten a round in the suit.

Always lead trumps, regardless of the score and your own hand. It is the only safe way, for if your suit

gets established and your partner has a trump, he is sure to put it on your king card.

The applause of the gallery must go with the loudest talker—nine times out of ten the outsider will know nothing of the game; and if you speak loud enough to prevent your adversary being heard, the outsiders must think you the best player.

Talleyrand said language was given to conceal your thoughts. This is stuff; it was given to hide your blunders.

Even a jackass can refute his opponent if he bray loud enough. Learn thy ways from this poor beast, and open wide thy mouth.

Never lead from a four or five suit without an honour. In my opinion it is very little use playing at all unless you have an ace, king suit to start with.

It is a bad sign if your adversary leads several winning cards without stopping to pick up the tricks. On the contrary, if you have a bad hand and a heavy bet on, and your partner thus leads out his cards, it has a very exhilarating effect.

I never make a mistake, and I don't see why you should. If you do, never admit it.

If your partner looks savage, begin scolding first; but if he has the advantage of the start, make up your loss by the loudness of your voice.

If you make a blunder whereby you incur a penalty, always declare it is ungentlemanly to take advantage of such mistakes. If your adversary is very weak, he may under such circumstances believe your statement. If for such blunders your adversary has a choice of two penalties, never stop to give him time to consider which is the best penalty for him. What is that to you? If

you have any difficulty on this subject, always declare it is so difficult to know what is a reasonable time, and this will convince the most unreasonable. Exact every penalty against your opponent with the utmost rigour, but if your side has to pay, never submit with a good grace. Your opponents may be determined to have their due, but what you say may have an effect next time. Any way, if you have to pay, make your adversaries as uncomfortable as possible.

THE QUESTION OF LUCK.

A letter to the Editor of THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

SIR,—There are few that would venture to assert that there is no such thing as luck. What luck is, and by what laws it is governed, so far as I know, none can tell. The philosopher refuses to admit that luck exists. The mathematician alleges it is governed by the doctrine of chances. The superstitious believe that it accrues to the person possessing some charm. I presume that there is no card-player that is not acquainted with some other player always lucky. Such an one goes on for years and years holding wonderfully good cards. The belief, at any rate, is universal that such beings exist, and every card-player knows at least one such happy mortal.

The subject is one that puzzles me much, and I should like to find an explanation. It certainly is within my knowledge that there are lucky and unlucky players, and although I have a belief in the efficacy of

skill to a limited extent, still I say luck beats skill; and it seems to me that the moment a player becomes skilful the luck deserts him. Does not the young player as a rule win? I fancy I see an explanation how it is that the muffs win. If they did not win they would give up the game, which, as an intellectual entertainment, can be of no amusement to them. The bad players that lose retire from the contest. The good players that lose have become so engrossed with the amusement that they do not dream of retiring from an unprofitable contest, and the consequence is that the lucky and unlucky good players remain to meet only the lucky bad players.

I cannot say this is a satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon, but it is an explanation, and a bad reason at Whist is considered better than no reason. But you, sir, will say the cards must equalise themselves. I don't see why they should. If, for a series of years, a man goes on with a majority of trumps and court cards, I don't see why the Goddess Luck should change her tactics, and give him a less quantity of her favours. As a question of chance, I never could see what the past had to do with the present. The luck attaches to persons as cats to houses. The lucky players can do no wrong, whilst the unlucky players seem never to do right.

What is perhaps more to the point is, that ill-luck affects the play. The good players even lose confidence, and do not take the chances they otherwise would. Nay, more, this luck affects not only the individual players, but the play of the whole club, and so the play goes from bad to worse. Each man plays without faith in the other, and that thing luck, which

none of us understand, has a material influence on the welfare of individuals, and, through the individuals, the whole mass.

This, sir, is a subject worthy of examination. I know that it is open to ridicule, but so are all things that we don't comprehend; and the more shallow the critic the more certain is he to laugh at my credulity.

My object in writing to you is rather to invite an inquiry into the proposition whether luck exists, or is the result of the imagination alone; and if it exists, to ascertain if there be no laws which govern this luck. I am quite aware that you are an unbeliever in luck; that you have no faith in seats or cards, and I know also that you will say my profession of belief in luck is not serious because I would not back two bad lucky players against yourself and another equally unlucky player, but I say beforehand this is beside the question. The luck exists, and it is the duty of those who make a study of matters connected with cards, to try and ascertain what this thing luck is, and not treat the object as childish nonsense. It is too late in the day to treat a thing as non-existent that has been believed in by every nation under the sun.

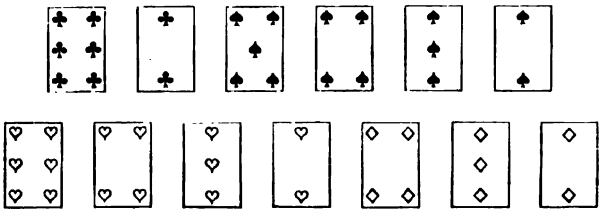
INQUIRER.

WHIST CURIOSITIES.

From THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

Four gentlemen of position (one known personally to us) declare that, at the Surbiton Club a player at Whist held the hand given below. The cards had been played with several times. Any queer

combination of cards will occur; but the hand certainly contains more of the smallest cards than any hand that we have ever seen recorded. Clubs trumps.



A friend to whom we showed the above says:—

"From a calculation of the probabilities it appears that the odds in any particular deal of holding no card above a six are 10,922,144 to 1.

"Now assuming (as is probably not far from the fact) that there are in London and the immediate neighbourhood 80 clubs at which Whist is played daily at one table, and 10 at which it is played at two tables, and that play is continued at each table for six hours, with an average of 20 rubbers or 50 games in that time (which is an excessive estimate), we shall have 5,000 games played and (allowing three deals to each game) 60,000 individual hands dealt daily at these 90 clubs.

"From which it appears that the chances of a hand with no card above a six being dealt at some one of the supposed 90 clubs on any particular day is $\frac{60000}{10922144}$, or that the odds are about 182 to 1 against it. In other words, such a hand would be dealt rather more than twice a year at the whole 90 clubs, and at any one club where Whist was carried on

daily, Sundays included, the event would happen just once in fifty years."

"THE CARDS NEVER FORGIVE."

The Whist-player's maxim that "the cards never forgive," is based upon experience of the fact that, when you have got the game in your hands and throw the game away, the peculiar combination under which success was possible is not likely to recur again.

AN ARKANSAS FATHER'S ADVICE TO HIS SON.

Bob, you are about leaving home for strange parts. You are going to throw me out of the game and go it alone. The odds are agin you, Bob. Remember that industry and perseverance are the winning cards, as they are the "bowers." Book learning and all that sort of thing will do to fill up with, like small trumps, you must have the bowers to back them, or they ain't worth shucks. If luck is agin you pretty strong, don't cave in and look like a sick chicken on a rainy day, but hold up your head and make believe you are flush of trumps, then they don't play so hard agin you. I've lived and travelled around some, and I've found out that as soon as folks thought you held a weak hand they'd all buck agin you strong. So when you're sorter weak, keep on a bold front, but play cautious

—be satisfied with a p'int. Many's the hand I've seen euchred because they played for too much. Keep your eye well skimmed, Bob; don't let 'em nig * you; recollect, the game lies as much with the head as with the hands. Be temperate; never get drunk, for then, no matter how you play it, two bowers and the ace won't save you, for there's certain to be a misdeal, or something wrong. And another thing, Bob (this was spoken in a low tone), don't go too much on women; queens is kinder poor cards, the more you have of them the worse for you; you might have three and nary trump. I don't say discard 'em all; you get hold of one that is a trump; it's all your good, and there's to be one out of four. And above all, Bob, be honest; never take a man's trick wot don't belong to you, nor "slip cards nor nig," * for then you can't look your man in the face; and when that's the case there's no fun in the game; it's a regular "cut-throat." So now, Bob, farewell. Remember what I tell you, and you'll be sure to win; and if you don't it sarves you right to be "skunked."—*Brooklyn Review.*

TO A LADY WHO WAS CAUGHT "PEEPING" AT WHIST.

BY H. J. C. ANDREWS.

Celia! thy skill at Whist is past dispute,
Who can the number of thy "tricks" compute?
When, sitting side by side, those roving eyes
All the dead secrets of my hand surprise;

* "Nig" is a term used in Euchre, and means a revoke.

One furtive glance, heigh, presto! all's revealed,
And my sad fate, without "revoke," is sealed.
Tho' I play "Cavendish" without a stumble,
Or rival Clay—my partner still may grumble.
Oh, partner! partner mine! did'st thou but know
I play but "dummy" to *one* faithless foe,
Thy scorn and hatred would to pity melt,
But, ah! in silent woe my wrongs are felt
And not expressed, save in these plaintive verses,
Which now my muse in deepest grief rehearses.
What cards I have, it matters scarce a rush,
If rosy red, they're scanned without a blush.
Deaf to man's "suit," full oft the fair we see,
Oh that to mine thou, traitress! *blind* would be.
Alas! thy base designs remain unshaken,
First my best "diamonds" are coolly taken,
And not content with such successful raids,
Next follows—so to speak—a "dig" in "spades."
Then, after meekly suffering cruel "rubs,"
As husbands do from wives—concerning "clubs,"
I sit at last an image of despair,
Helpless and hopeless by the conquering fair.
What *shall* I do to cure these doleful dumps?
Shall I lay down my "hand"? nay, what are "trumps"?
One still is mine—one last faint chance is left
(Of aught besides so ruthlessly bereft),
So, Celia, fair but false!—I turn from thee,
Lest thou should'st steal my only "heart" from me.

A WHIST ANECDOTE.

There was once a well-known Whist-player, a wily, crafty wight,
Who was blessed—or curst, as may be—with a penetrating sight,
And at one time he would hazard the most unheard-of guesses;
At another time he'd revel in the wildest of finesses.
So keen were his (third hand) perceptions nothing seemed to blind him—
For instance, he'd finesse ace, nine, and find the eight behind him.

Our friend was playing at the club one melting day in June,
With a funny Frenchman to his right that sultry afternoon;
And when the Frenchman's turn to play arrived he made a pause,
So marked and so extremely long his partner asked the cause.
The foreigner replied, "Le Monsieur, là—*he* understand,
I only vait till he 'ave done alookin' at my hand."

And as he spoke he turned, and smiled upon our friend the lynx-eyed,
Who grew quite pale, and said, "I hope there's no one here who thinks I'd
Take so shameful an advantage as that you just have heard;

I never *dreamt* of looking at your cards, sir, on my word."
"Vell, vell! I'm glad you didn't," said the Frenchman; "so I say,
Mille pardons, but I vish you vouldn't look so moch my vay."

At length the rub was over, and the big bell rang for dinner,
And that dear facetious Frenchman (with his partner) was the winner.
But the Frenchman still had kept his cards almost upon the table,
Tho' his partner frowned and coughed, and warned as well as he was able;
But the foreigner was listless, heeding neither cough nor frown;
Nay, the more his partner writhed, the more *he* kept his weapons down.

But when the "lynx-eyed" left the room the partner hinted mildly,
"How *could* you be so thoughtless—to expose your hand so wildly?
If you must play with a man like that, do all that you are able
To spoil his plans—if needful keep your cards beneath the table.
When you see a mad dog near your duty surely is to muzzle him."
The Frenchman smiled, "I only show him von or two —to puzzle him."

DR. LAVIES in "THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS."

IN PRAISE OF WHIST.

Looking backward down the ages,
Through the dust of rolling years,
Gleaming bright against a background
Dark with tumult, toil, and fears;
Grateful glimpses as of firelight,
Showing out through chilling mist,
Catch we of that care-dispelling,
Rare time-honoured game of Whist!

Dim the legends and traditions
That surround its natal hour,
When, like some bright streamlet flowing,
Making e'er its banks to flower;
It hath rippled on unfailing,
Cheering many a way-worn heart
That hath sought a brief refreshment
From the world's brief strife apart.

Ever loved by sage and scholar,
Sought by men of weary brain,
It alike, at cot or castle,
Still doth favourite remain;
With its mellow, genial presence
It hath stood the crucial test;
Peerless, midst a host of rivals,
It doth wear the victor's crest.

V. E. COLLINS.

HARTFORD, U.S.A.,
February, 1878.

THE AVOIDANCE OF BICKERING.

I suppose that all the writing in the world would not put a stop to the unpleasant remarks and exhibitions of temper which are the too-frequent concomitants of card-playing. Still it may be useful to bring forward certain considerations, which, if deflected, may tend to prevent these unpleasantries; and surely, if they were to be prevented or greatly modified, even only in one instance, the writing of volumes would be sufficiently justified.

Now the first consideration that ought, I think, to occur to a Whist-player at the end of a hand, in which, according to his view, his partner may have made the grossest blunder, thereby losing the game and perhaps also the rubber, is the irrevocable nature of the matter. The thing is past; it is over; it is done with. Nothing can alter it. It is absolutely irrevocable, and nothing that can be said can make the slightest difference. Then why say anything? Well, I think the player reasons thus. It is true that what is done cannot be undone; but then, if I point out to my partner his error, perhaps he will avoid it in future. Now I think this is a mistake. If a player does not perceive the mistake himself, and himself makes up his mind that henceforth he will be more careful and avoid the error, all the lecturing in the world will fail to do him any good. He will probably be flurried and worried, and be more likely to make another mistake than if nothing had been said.

A further point should also be borne in mind, and

it is this. I take it that whatever card, or in whatever way your partner played, he so played because he thought it was the best thing to do, and the most likely to win. Did a man ever deliberately play badly on purpose to lose? Bearing in mind, then, this consideration, what right have you to pitch into your partner on a sort of assumption that he really tried to lose, or did not try to win? The effect of so doing is frequently to cause him to play badly afterwards. A player of weak judgment in a critical position will often play very well in an ordinary position; but after he has been remonstrated with for playing what appeared to him—after probably some consideration—the right card, he will hesitate to trust his judgment when very likely he has come to a correct conclusion on a subsequent occasion, and will play badly entirely in consequence of the remarks to which he has been subjected.

Again, a player should bear in mind his own mistakes, and should remember that if the partner he has is inferior to him, he may presently find himself the partner of a superior player, and may require all the forbearance which a short time previously he did not extend to another.

Then, again, the Whist-player should remember that inequality, as regards the goodness of the players, is as much an order of nature as inequalities in the capacities of persons with whom he has to do in every-day life, and it is one of the conditions under which he sits down to play that he takes the partner chance gives him; and it is really childish to sit down deliberately to play under certain well-known and clearly accepted conditions, and then to become peevish when

what is exceedingly probable under these conditions happens.

In conclusion, I will only add this observation, that it is a good thing for the purpose respecting which I have been writing, to try and get ingrained into your mind that to pitch into your partner at Whist is as bad and impolitic, and I may say as impossible a thing to do, as it would be to revoke.

HENRY M. PHILLIPS in "THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS."

CHANGES IN THE WHIST WORLD.

Middle-aged and elderly players find that Whist has changed, and not always for the better. The "Peter" was for some time the nuisance; but it is not used so much as formerly. The fever ran its course, the patient generally recovered, and this drastic measure became less frequently used. In those days nothing was thought of but the "Peter." If A Petered, B thought he had won the game, but then it often happened that the game was not won, and the better players soon found out that by forcing the adversary who Petered, Petering was not always profitable.

The mania now is for leading the lowest but one and echoing the call, and these complaints, like the other, will soon be reduced to reason, and then it may do little harm. At present the lowest but one is used without the players understanding the weapons they use, and the adversary with average skill gains the advantage. The players who use a new method forget very often that an ingenious adversary can take more advantage of knowledge than the weak follower of a

new idea, and assuredly the best player will gain the advantage of any new scheme before the muff will find out how to use profitably his new idea.

At present the lowest but one and the echo is simply playing into the hands of those that can take advantage of the knowledge at the end of the hand, and if the young players, or those who think they can apply their knowledge, but who are incapable of counting the hands at the end, choose to thus play they may bring back Whist to a game of skill, which, to some extent, was lost by the introduction of the "Peter."

The weapon must not, however, be used indiscriminately, as it is now, for the player to get the benefit, and it must be borne in mind that by so leading the power of playing from a weak suit is taken away. The two systems cannot be worked *pari passu*, and the element time is one that is ignored. This game is too ponderous, and it is better adapted for Long Whist. We look on at these players with amazement. Because they know this lead they think they play Whist. The object of Whist is to win, and although they might be able to win more largely by this system, given the necessary capacity, we are quite sure that at present they are only losing their money. A child may know the difference between an ace and a king. In the course of time he may know the leads, including the lowest but one, but it does not follow that they are Whist-players.

It is much safer for these to lead out their aces and kings, and make what they can, and it would be much better for the players we have in view to make tricks whilst they can, instead of riding this hobby to death. We strongly advise young players to concentrate their

thoughts on the leading features of the game—to try to read the game so as to know what each player is driving at, and make tricks whilst they can.

Some men play a more dashing game than formerly, and these win. For reasons we have explained before, the points are looked upon as of little consequence, and again, so far, the game is changed. It is more erratic and more difficult.

Formerly, we tried to play a straightforward game, and the only chance for that system to come back again is the lowest but one if generally practised; because, if the system becomes general, the weak leads are impossible. In former days, an ordinary player would force a strong hand, now the weak players and the lowest but one leaders generally are too stingy to force with a winning card. The lead of knave from king, knave, ten, and another, or others, has become more general, and the rule of playing ace on knave with ace, queen is not so certain as heretofore.

The game is not the simple and straightforward game that it was. The players have gone into leading-strings, and wait for the instruction of their partner. They will not lead trumps, because their commanding officer has not told them to do so. They will not rely on their own judgment. They think something is going to turn up at the close of their hand, because their partner has five of a suit, and they find that their partner has not sufficient strength to bring in his suit. If you show your partner that you have five, nine times out of ten he has not sufficient brains to apply his knowledge. The players appear to overload their brains, with the natural effect of getting into a fog. Simplicity is the game of the young, and the more

experienced should play down to the capacity of their partners. This used to be the rule, now no player tries to help a young player. It is taken for granted that a new player is a muff, and the darker you make the game the more difficult it will be to your opponents.

No attempt is made to help the young idea, or to get as much out of his hand as possible. The result of this is that there are few rising players. The Whist laws are in a very unsatisfactory state, but to some extent there is uniformity of decision.

"Cavendish" and ourselves, after some little discussion on the principles of law, soon found common ground. The manners and customs of the table, we think, have not improved. The wrangling continues, but the chivalry and high feeling that should characterise gentlemen in dealing with gentlemen in the matter of their amusements is a thing of the past. They no longer think of the pleasure of others, but only of their own. No one obliges another; no one is willing to make up a second table for fear that they will not get their full complement of games.

Loo, Napoleon, and Poker are the enemies of Whist, and, as we have repeatedly pointed out, are as certain to drive Whist out of the market as Whist drove out Chess. And in all these games the play is much too high. Granted that a man has a right to gamble if he pleases, there must be a limit to his stakes. The man with £500 a year ought not to play for as high stakes as one with £5,000; yet the members of a club cannot all have the same income. We cannot assume that every man has £2,000 a year certain; but suppose he has this sum, £500 is the outside that he can expect to have for the purposes of pleasure, and therefore they

C. MOSSOP.
(*Editor of "The Westminster Papers."*)

See p. 299.

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can have no right to sit down to play a game where it is possible to lose the whole in a night, and where the average won or lost must be at least £100. It is no matter how good or bad player you may be, the loss sometime or other must come.

At Piquet and Rubicon games ten years ago a man of the middle class would play 3d. points; now no players would sit down to play at these stakes. The play is, we think, much too high, and must end in the ruin of some of the members. To start with, you get laxity in payments, and this, if permitted, is the ruin of any club or society.

Too much sitting up in a smoky room is not good for the health, and high play is exciting to the brain. Late hours do not conduce to longevity. Heavy dinners and wine without exercise are bad. But if we get all these combined the brain is overworked, the man becomes feverish, testy, and quarrelsome. We have preached moderation; do not let all our preaching be in vain.—*From the last number of* THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

MANGLING DONE HERE.

We do not refer to the horrors of the battle-field, nor to the useful institution immortalised by the great Mantalini, but to the system of torture inflicted in the card-room. As a simple looker-on we are lost in amazement at the amount of misery men inflict on their fellow-creatures. One fancies that we are in the operating-room of a London hospital—that a horrid genie has seized some stragglers and forced them to be

experimented upon, on condition that they shall be permitted to return the compliment. The knife is hardly withdrawn, warm from the body of the victim, before it is plunged into another. Tortures are sometimes premeditated, but more often they arise from inattention, carelessness, and ignorance. Some sit down to play Whist without any knowledge of the game. They might practise at home. If one mounts his steed for the first time, it would be somewhat unfair to the other riders if he commenced his career in the Grand National. Yet, comparing small things with great, this is what the ignorant Whist-player does. It is true he cannot at the Whist table break anyone's neck. Look at this player. His eyes with frenzy roll over the room; at the ceiling, down on the floor. Steadfast only when he looks at his own hand—the only place where his eye should not rest. This is the first lesson a young player should learn. If the eye is so restless that it must look at this player and that, at this end of the room and that, it is much better to abandon Whist at once; it is not your occupation. But the player to whom we refer has been indulging in what he is pleased to call Whist for many a long year, and has never succeeded in keeping that restless organ on the table for the third part of a hand. Yet he plays for his own and his partner's money. The absence of intelligence we cannot help. Inattention is unpardonable when another's welfare is at stake. If we could establish a Whist Bee, we doubt (if the players were examined without notice) whether in the middle of a hand one-half of the players could tell the trump card. We saw a player lose a rubber a short time ago. He had a heart (all the trumps were out),

and his partner had all the rest of the hearts palpably in his hand. His partner said, "We had every trick. You knew I had all the hearts, and yet you would not lead one." This is scarcely a fair way of putting it. We often hear men say, "You knew I had so-and-so," but the fact is (as in this case) the player knew nothing about it. He had no more notion of the position of hearts than of any other card. He had not the faculty to infer. A player may reason incorrectly, but some do not reason at all. Thus A leads ace in a plain suit, and follows with another round. Second hand wins with the king, and returns the suit. The now second player (A's partner) has none of the suit, and with a strong trump hand he puts on the trump two. With a strong hand he trumps a doubtful card, doubtful, we mean, from his point of view. He does not stop to realise what A had led from. He does not attempt to place himself in his partner's position. He might have reflected and said, "What does the lead of ace and another mean?" My partner is of one school or the other. He may have led ace and another desiring to trump. Bad play we think, but there are players who thus play, and we must take men as we find them. If he be of the ruffing school surely it would be good policy to let him trump instead of my doing so, and in the meantime by my discard I can tell him my suit. But he may further reason, "An ace and another originally led should mean my partner has five of the suit. If so there is no reason why he should not have the queen: why, therefore, with my strong hand should I trump a doubtful card?" Some such reasoning as this should pass through his mind. It is but the work of a second, and the result either way should be to

induce the player to avoid doing what he did, viz., trump and get over-trumped. The first Whist lesson, we have said, should be to keep your eye on the table, not to let the attention be drawn to other parts of the room, and not let the eye rest on your own cards. The last defect is the reason for many of the stupid things we see committed at Whist by men of intelligence. The second lesson is to attempt to reason. A bad reason is better than none at all; with practice the reasoning faculty should become sharpened, and that which is at first an effort becomes mechanical. Let us not be misunderstood. The reasoning process must take place in the player's mind. It must not break out into fervid declamation or testy argument; and the third lesson to be drawn from the above example is the value of a discard.

The best players have not yet fully realised this most difficult subject. The number of games won and lost by a discard is incalculable. In the case before us we have the discard in its most simple form; it at once directs A's attention to B's suit, and the knowledge of that suit governs the play during the remainder of the hand. When a player once realises the value to him of a discard he may be induced to think of the value of a discard to an opponent; thus, when a player passes a winning card he knows, we suppose, that he is giving away a trick, but does he reflect that he may be doing much more than that? The discard that a third player may make will tell his partner what to do, and in like manner again direct the remainder of the game. The players who are so stingy that they will not sacrifice one of their trumps on a winning card seldom become good Whist-players.

It is much better to play a small trump with the certainty that it will be over-trumped than to let the trick go. The same stinginess often loses a game when the second player will not cover the second best of a suit because he knows the third player will trump. The third player does not trump, partly because he suspects the second player is holding up, or because he thinks his partner desires to clear the suit, or, lastly, because the player can get a good discard. The odd thing about this is that the stingy player, who will not sacrifice one of his trumps or good cards, is the player of all others that does not hesitate to sacrifice his partner's cards. He who is a screw with his own is often the most venturesome with his partner's. This style of player, with weakness in trumps, is sure to lead trumps. Will they never realise that the cards of their partner are, for the purpose of game, their own cards; that they play with twenty-six cards on their side, and not thirteen only. There is a little point in play that weak players do not seem to understand. A player leads originally for a ruff, and he finds (happy man) his partner with command of the suit, and the leader gets two discards. The case we saw was this:—A led a single spade, his partner had ace, king, queen, and A got rid of the nine and ten of diamonds. By the fall of the cards the last player cannot have another spade, so that B knew that if his partner trumped he would be overtrumped. To continue the spade was bad play; B had the diamond ace, and he could have led that, and followed with another, when A would have had a better chance for the ruff; or he could have led the plain suit which is presumably his partner's; or he could have led trumps, seeing that A could only have

two suits and one diamond, queen or knave, or two diamonds, queen, knave, or king, knave. It would seem improbable that a player would lead a singleton with a suit of king, knave, ten, nine, or queen, knave, ten, nine. We should, therefore, expect to find that A's original hand consisted of single spade, three diamonds to the knave, four trumps, all small, and five of the other suit, so small that the player calculated that by no possibility could he establish the suit. Then, having got three tricks, and ace of diamonds for the fourth, we should have been inclined to go for the fifth on the diamonds. Our partner has asked to be forced, and we can force him with greater advantage in diamonds than we can in spades. We do not say this is good play, but by analogy we are justified in the force, and the force in the one suit is clearly better than in the other. It is useless to tell any player that, except in critical positions, it is seldom any use in passing a king in a plain suit, having the ace. If men will not learn this from pocket experience, they will not learn it from our preaching or from reason. It seems equally useless to protest against one partner taking another's trick without weighty reason, and without an accurate knowledge of the position of the card. As to forcing without justifiable strength, this is too sore a point to be touched upon. The player of six years old should occasionally look to the score, but we are satisfied that players of sixty years and upwards often fail to do so; and as to clearing the partner's suit and getting out of his way, one would fancy the players had been brought up on the top of a 'bus, where the chief business and pleasure of life seems to consist in blocking the way. If we add that those players who pretend to under-

stand the value of the discard generally reverse their theory in practice—they are afraid to lead a winning card, because some one will get a discard—we think we have suggested and recalled as many subjects of torture as were ever invented in the Middle Ages.

THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

WITHOUT PREJUDICE!

The only case in the law-books referring to Double Dummy is the great case of "Jones *v.* Smith," which, curiously enough, is not mentioned in "Smith's Leading Cases." The dispute arose in this way:—Jones was a Jew bill-discounter, indulging in 50 per cent., whenever he could get it; and amongst his customers in this branch of business was Smith, an attorney, the defendant in the action. In the course of the attorney's business, inquiry was made of him as to the respectability of Jones, and Smith replied that "Jones was as great a scoundrel as any unhung."

The receiver of the letter published it by showing it to various friends of Jones, and when Jones heard of this ingratitude on the part of Smith, instead of bringing his action against the publisher of the libel, he issued a writ against Smith. The declaration averred these facts, and claimed damages for the slander. The defendant pleaded that the alleged libel was true, and the case was set down for trial at the Kingston Assizes before the Chief Baron Pollock and a special jury. The assizes at Kingston last about three weeks, and the courts are capable of containing about a third of

the persons necessarily engaged in the business; and Kingston-on-Thames itself is not the most lively place in the world in which to spend a week. The day was wet, and the parties to the action walking disconsolately in the High Street, bumped against each other.

"Hullo, Jones," said Smith, "this is precious dull work, old fellow, is it not?"

They were old friends before, in spite of 50 per cent.

"Yes, it is," says Jones. "I don't know what to do with myself."

"Let's drink," says Smith.

"Oh, yes; but how about my action?"

"Oh," says Smith, "we'll drink without prejudice, you know."

"All right," says Jones, and, in the language of Mr. Artemus Ward, accordingly they drunk.

In the course of their conversation they bewailed, as was natural, their sad lot in being kept from better employment in such a wretched hole, and at last Smith suggested Double Dummy.

"Oh, yes," said Jones, "but how about my action?"

"Oh," says Smith, "we'll play, you know, without prejudice."

"All right," says Jones; and accordingly they sat down to Double Dummy, at which Smith succeeded in drawing Jones of £25.

In the morning they appear in Court, and Smith expected that Jones had forgiven the offence and would withdraw the record. Not a bit of it. Fifty-per-shent would have his bond. The case was called on; Mr. Chambers, Q.C., appears for the plaintiff; Mr. Lush, Q.C. (afterwards the Judge), appeared for the defence. Mr. Chambers opened the case, and his

junior examined the plaintiff, and Mr. Lush proceeded to cross-examine him. "Do I understand, Mr. Jones, that you have been playing all night at Double Dummy with the defendant?"

"Yes, sir," says Mr. Jones, "but it was without prejudice."

"What?" says the Chief Baron.

"Yes, my lord; but it was without prejudice."

"I don't understand," said my lord. "Do I comprehend aright, that with this man, who has called you the greatest thief unhung, you sat down and played a night through at Double Dummy?"

"Yes, my lord; but it was clearly understood that it was without prejudice."

"Well, gentlemen," said my lord to the jury, "I don't see why you and I should be made to waste our time in trying this action. The plaintiff evidently is not much aggrieved at the expression that has been made use of by the defendant concerning him. It seems to me the intent is the substance of the action, and the plaintiff cannot imagine there was any serious intention on the part of the defendant to injure him. He seems the best judge of his own honour. . . . It appears to me this libel has been condoned, and therefore, gentlemen, I direct you to find your verdict for the defendant."

And thus ended, except in the matter of costs, which poor Jones had to pay, the great Double Dummy action.

The moral of all this, gentle reader, is, that if any one calls you the greatest thief unhung, and you bring your action therefor, don't play Double Dummy with your opponent.

WHIST POINTS SINCE CLAY.

To the Editor of THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

SIR,—Certain points respecting the play at Whist have arisen since Clay wrote his treatise, others have been passed over by him, and others are treated by him in a way that requires some further comment or elucidation. I propose to make some few observations on two or three of such points.

In the first place, with reference to "asking for trumps." Assuming you take Clay's rule—by which, however, a great many modern players refuse to be bound—for your guide, that is to say, you only ask for trumps when you have four trumps, two honours, or five trumps, one honour, with other cards in your own or your partner's hand, making a trump lead desirable, are you justified in considering you are acting on that rule if you ask for trumps when your partner has an honour cut him, and you have four trumps and one honour, or five trumps without an honour? The point may occur in connection with many rules or practices on the subject that may, by any particular player, have been adopted. As far as I am concerned I think the modification in the rule I have been commenting on should be recognised.

Again, Clay lays it down, that if your partner plays a ten, second player, on a low card led, and the next round drops a small card, you must not consider that he has asked for trumps, because the ten may be the regular play—from knave, ten, and another. Now, this, I think, requires some modification in statement;

for why should I be deprived of signalling for trumps in a case where it might be most important for me to do so, when the suit in which I could ask happened to consist of the ten and a small card only? My partner might have the knave, or it might fall during the two rounds; and in either case my partner could see I had played an unnecessarily high card. I think, therefore, the point should be stated as follows:—Your partner playing second hand, on a low card led, a nine, ten, knave, or queen, does not ask for trumps unless you know the ten, knave, queen, or king is not in his hand. If you know this then your partner has clearly asked for trumps.

I do not refer to the king and another, as so many players consider it proper in this case to put on the king second hand; and there are other objections to asking with such a suit. Here, however, I may perhaps remark that after the conclusive demonstration given by "Mogul" in the *Field*, some years back, it is surprising that it is still considered right in trumps to play the king second player, when the hand has only king and another, and that this is certainly one of the points in respect of which the rule of Clay should not only be amended but reversed.

Clay says, too, that you cannot ask for trumps except in the first round of a suit; otherwise, he remarks, there would be an end to playing false cards, which he declines to say should never be played. Now I think this statement is too absolute, for trumps may very well be asked for with small cards late in the hand, and whether you should ask or not with higher cards is a question of judgment, depending on your estimate of the partner you are playing with.

Another point, not referred to by Clay, but treated in part by "Cavendish," is the question which card you should play when you play back your adversary's lead. In the case of your partner's lead you return the higher of two cards left, and the lowest of three. Should this rule be followed in playing back your adversary's lead? For the purpose of enabling your partner to count your cards, following this rule is useful; but when the card would be a strengthening card for the adversary, to return it would seem to be playing the adversaries' game, and I think, therefore, that no universal rule, such as that respecting the return of your partner's lead, should be made on the subject, but the point must be left to the player's discretion.

Again, the language used by Clay in laying down the rule respecting the card to return to your partner, has led, and still continually leads, to much misapprehension. Clay says return your partner the highest card when you had *originally* three of the suit, and the lowest when you had *originally* four or more of the suit. In consequence of this statement many players, after discarding or trumping, still return their partner the lower of the two cards left in their hands, because they had originally four cards of the suit. This is clearly wrong, and the rule is more accurately stated by "Cavendish." Clay should have said, when you have, at the time you return your partner's lead, two cards of that suit, return the highest; and when at the time in question you have three or more, return the lowest.

From observation in play it has occurred to me that with queen and two small cards, it is inexpedient when second player to cover, but this point requires more

consideration than I have just now time to give to it, and I should be glad if any of the readers of THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS would go into the question and state the conclusion they come to.

Yours, &c.,
H. M. P.
(HENRY M. PHILLIPS).

DESCHAPELLES AND THE GRAND COUP.

It should be remembered that the finest Whist-players yet known knew nothing of our signals. It would probably have surprised Deschapelles had he been told that the time would come when persons calling themselves Whist-players would think more of a number of arbitrary signals, taxing only the attention, than of all the points of strategy which he and his contemporaries regarded as the essence of the game. He would probably have been rather more than surprised if he had heard of such a saying as a critic in the *Pall Mall Gazette* got off against me, that Whist without signalling is, in fact, Whist without a purpose. Clay used to say that he had never played with any one who came near Deschapelles for rapidity in recognising when there would arise occasion for playing the *grand coup* (that is, under-trumping his partner or throwing away a winning card to avoid the lead when leading would involve the loss of a trick out of two which might both be made if the coup player were led up to). *This* is Whist. It is strategy of this sort which alone makes the game worth playing

by intelligent persons, who need something more than mere pip-counting to get enjoyment out of a card game. But how many of the modern Whist-players, whose whole attention is directed to watching for Peters, Echoes, Penultimates, and for opportunities for displaying these signals, ever see the occasion for the *coup*, even when it stares them in the face? As for seeing it four or five tricks ahead, not one of them ever does.—R. A. PROCTOR, *Longman's Magazine*, Vol. ix., No. 54, April, 1887.

WHIST STRATEGY AND SIGNALLING.

The late lamented RICHARD A. PROCTOR—so distinguished as an astronomer, mathematician, and Whist-player—remarked that he had done something, in his book "How to Play Whist,"* to "kill the signals." In a notable article in *Longman's Magazine*, Vol. vii., Mr. Proctor discussed at length the question—"Is

* Mr. PROCTOR'S excellent Manual (published by Messrs. LONGMAN & Co.) will well repay study. Its features are very fairly noticed by Mr. JAMES INNES MINCHIN in "The Academy" for 1885, Vol. 27, p. 128. The reviewer considers that Mr. PROCTOR'S method of treating the leads, while not so easy, perhaps, for the learner as the author considers it, is one well calculated to impress *the meaning of the leads*. The learner, under older methods, is apt to consider the proper leads empirical, "whereas in fact they are founded on principles evolved from the long experience of Whist-players, which only personal experience can enable the tyro to grasp."

Mr. PROCTOR'S book contains forty games, carefully annotated. Eight of these are original, actual hands supplied by that fine player the late Mr. F. LEWIS, accompanied by his own interesting and valuable notes. The Manual is one that should be in the hands of every real student of "The Noble Game."

Whist-Signalling Honest?" The following passage gives his view of one phase of Whist strategy and the possible varieties of signal:—

"Suppose that a player, A, who has a strong hand, especially in trumps, holds the knave and a small one in a suit which is led by the enemy, he being the fourth player. If the trick is won by third player with the king or queen, A may perhaps deem it well to play the knave rather than the small one. For while the knave will fall, and most probably fall ineffectively next round, its play first round may lead the enemy to suppose A holds no more in the suit, and therefore to lead trumps lest one of their strong suits be ruffed, or lest perhaps a cross-ruff fatally injurious to them should be established. Now supposing the enemy not thus entrapped to lead trumps, A's partner, if he is an old hand, will naturally observe A's attempt to get trumps led by the enemy, and will therefore at the first opportunity lead them himself. It would be the same if A played knave from knave, ten, instead of from knave and a small card not in sequence with it, except that in this case the device, as costing nothing, would not imply quite so strong a wish for a trump lead as in the other case. In every such case, where a player obviously played a higher card where a lower one would have done as well, or—if not in sequence—even better, to induce the enemy to lead trumps, there has been an expression of a wish that trumps should be led. And this wish has been expressed in a manner strictly in accordance with Whist strategy. The player has done what seemed good for his game and his partner's, and the partner, if a player, seeing what has thus been held good strategy, makes his inferences accordingly,

precisely as he does from the play of his partner, or of either opponent when leading, or when second, third, or fourth hand. This is part of the game, and the issues of such manœuvres are among the *gaudia certaminis.*

"There is all the difference in the world, however, between a piece of strategy like this and the signal or 'Peter' as now established. To see this, one has only to consider what the signal would look like to a keen player not knowing its conventional significance, and seeing it for the first time. He would say to himself, 'What on earth can my partner (or either enemy) mean by playing the four when he held the two? He could gain nothing by it. It must have been sheer carelessness. I must ask him (if partner) at the end of the hand, or (if opponent) at the end of the rubber.' Now if the meaning of the signal were thereupon explained to him, and he were invited always to employ the signal when needed, and always to respond to it when displayed by a trustworthy partner, in what respect would this explanation differ from a direct attempt to introduce means of communication between players depending on matters entirely outside the game? If he asked an opponent, 'Why did you cough twice just before playing?' and the opponent said, 'In our club that means, The card I am playing is my last in the suit; but two coughs followed by a sneeze imply that trumps are to be led *instanter*, he would probably say, 'I would rather not play in your company.' But really there is not much to choose between the two methods of signalling. And I think, with 'Mogul,' there is absolutely nothing to choose, so far as fairness is concerned, between the 'Peter' and a system (generally admitted,

if that makes any difference) by which opening a suit of a different colour from trumps should be understood to mean all-round strength.

"As for the signal, though thus deduced from a strategic detail, being a development of a principle, that is in truth all nonsense. It is not a principle at Whist that you should play a high card to deceive the enemy into leading trumps when you want trumps led. This is but a dodge, often found effective, but assuredly no principle. And the play of the higher of two indifferent cards is not even a development of this dodge. It is something entirely different; for it is play which, of itself, could not possibly induce the enemy to lead trumps. One might as well take for a signal the play of all cards with the right hand when trumps are not wanted, and with the left hand when they are."

[The subject of "Conventions at Whist," has been treated at some length by Dr. William Pole, F.R.S., author of "The Philosophy of Whist," in an article which appeared in *The Fortnightly Review*, Vol. xxxi., p. 576.]

A CHAMPION OF "SIGNALLING."

A keen advocate of "signalling" writes a paper of some length on "Modern Whist" in *Temple Bar*, vol. lxxix, 1887. In it he makes the following observations:—

"Of course, if any four persons like to take a pack of cards, and play with them a game bearing about as

much resemblance to Whist as Skittles to Chess, there can be no reason why they should not do so; and this is what they must do if they try to play Whist without 'signalling.' If there is any truth in the argument against Whist signalling, it goes too far; much farther than those who bring it forward probably intend. Almost every card played in the game is a signal; that is to say, a skilful partner will draw some inference as to the number or value of the cards remaining in the hand of the player. And this is inevitable. It can only be from certain combinations of cards that the one played is the proper one to play; and if the partner has any confidence in the player, he will credit him with holding one of these combinations. A glance at the cards in his own hand may perhaps reduce this information to a more precise shape.

"Possibly, however, an objector to signalling may say that there is no harm in playing so as to give information to a partner, provided the card played is the one which would be played independently of any such motive; but that it becomes dishonest, or at any rate questionable, when one card is played in preference to another for that purpose. Who then is to judge what was the motive of the player? I doubt whether he could always do so himself. He has to form a rapid judgment between various, and sometimes conflicting, motives; and if rules are to be made restricting his liberty to play this or that card under particular circumstances, the game will soon cease to be a game at all.

"Let us examine an instance of frequent occurrence. Suppose my partner to begin the game by leading the king of a certain suit. I infer at once that he holds

either the ace or the queen also, or possibly both, because no good player would begin with the king otherwise; and if I hold one of these cards myself I credit him with the other, and play my game accordingly.

"For the sake of young players it may be explained that if my partner led the ace first, it would not show me that he held the king also, because the ace is the proper card to lead first if he holds five cards of the suit; and if he led the queen first, it would not show me that he held the king also, because the queen is the proper card to lead from a suit headed by queen, knave, ten.

"Now surely no one will say that a player holding ace and king ought to lead the ace first, or holding king and queen ought to lead the queen first, in order to avoid giving his partner correct information—for I need hardly remark that in the latter case the queen would take the first trick just as well as the king; no good player would, except for a special purpose, put his ace upon his partner's queen—nor even that he ought to lead such cards at random, sometimes the one and sometimes the other first, according to his fancy at the time. And yet the only reason for leading the higher of the two when holding king and queen, the lower when holding ace and queen, is that it gives information to the partner; and a genuine player of 'Bumblepuppy' would say that as the ace and king, or the king and queen, in the same hand are of equal value, it could not matter which he led or played at any time."

A RESULT OF THE SIGNALLING SYSTEM.

THE CALL FOR TRUMPS.

One of the most remarkable results of the signalling system, when thoroughly brought into vogue in a company of players of no exceptional strength, is the singular disproportion between the ability displayed in signalling and the power to make use of the knowledge obtained from signals. Your conventional player signals and counter-signals like Harlequin; but he is generally as helpless as Pantaloon to get any good from the knowledge he thus obtains. I recently asked a player, who thinks a good deal of his skill, why he signalled when strong in trumps. He answered readily, and rightly enough (though only parrot-like), "Because I want my partner to know that I am strong in trumps, and that we ought to play a forward game." When I asked, however, what he meant by a forward game, and what he considered the proper method of playing such a game, it appeared that his ideas were confused in the extreme. "Oh, of course one knows what a forward game is; it means a game in which one tries to make a large number of tricks; my partner knows I have plenty of trumps, so that I can probably ruff one of the plain suits, if not two, and get extra tricks that way; or we may get a cross ruff; or—or—bring in a long suit—in fine, we may take advantage of our strength generally." Is this too absurd to be believed? Ask ten players who fancy their Whist, and are proud in their knowledge of all the signals, what is the proper way of utilising the information given by the signal,

and seven out of the ten will talk just such nonsense. Nine out of ten who regard the Peter, the Echo, and the Penultimate (or original fourth) as the soul of the scientific game, show in actual practice that they think they have done all they need do when in response to the signal they have led trumps. Not quite so many, but at least one-half of the ten are quite capable of the enormity of forcing their partner, trumps having been played for a round or two, after it has become clear that one of the enemy matches him in trump strength.—*Longman's Magazine*, Vol. ix., No. 54, April, 1887.

THE CALL FOR TRUMPS.

The call for trumps is defined by Clay to consist in throwing away an unnecessarily high card: that is, playing it upon a trick which it is not intended to take. Suppose that I throw away such a card; it is evident that it cannot generally be known to be unnecessarily high until I have subsequently played a lower one of the same suit. My intention in playing the high card is to make the adversaries think that I have no more of the suit, and that I shall probably trump it the next time it is led. To prevent my doing so they would naturally lead trumps at once. If they do, my object is gained; but if they do not, and if I afterwards play a smaller card of the same suit, it becomes clear to all that I was trying to deceive the adversaries, so as to induce them to lead trumps. My partner, observing this, will lead trumps on the first opportunity in obedience to my

"call." Of course the higher the card thrown away the more forcibly does this reasoning apply; but the call is not a mere arbitrary convention in any case.—*Temple Bar*, Vol. lxxix., 1887.

A LIST OF SIGNALS AND THEIR CONDEMNATION.

In an able and lengthy article which appeared in *The Cornhill Magazine*, vol. lxii., 1886, entitled, "Whist, Rational and Artificial," and signed "M." (the distinguished player known as "Mogul"), there occurs the following passage and classification of signals:—

The so-called modern developments of the game tend with accumulating force to spoil it. These developments may be indifferently denominated "conventions" or "signals," and are methods of giving information not dependent on any natural inferences from the fall of cards, but on a prior understanding as to their significance. They are increasing in number every day, so that when we give our readers the following list we can only hope that it comprises all. It is possible there may be a dozen new ones to-morrow.

LIST OF SIGNALS IN USE OR SUGGESTED.

How made.	*Meaning.*
Returning a partner's lead with a small card and subsequently playing a smaller.	That you have no other.
Returning a partner's lead with any card and subsequently playing a higher.	That you have at least one more.

LIST OF SIGNALS IN USE OR SUGGESTED—*continued.*

How made.	*Meaning.*
Playing (not leading) a higher card than is necessary—*e.g.*, play a three from three two. (Known as the "call for trumps.")	That you have strong trumps and want your partner to lead to them.
Playing as above after a partner has done so or has led trumps. (Known as the "echo of the call.")	That you have four trumps.
Leading a small card and subsequently playing a smaller. (Known as the "penultimate.")	That you have five cards at least in suit led.
Discarding when the strength of trumps is adverse.	That you are strong in the suit which you discard and want your partner to lead it.

"Cavendish" now proposes to abandon the penultimate, and instead to adopt what are absurdly called "American leads," as under:—

Leading originally any card not being an honour or the ten.	That it is your fourth best card in the suit led.
After opening a suit with a high card, going on with one not in sequence with it.	That it is the third best of the suit left in your hand.
Leading on second round the lowest of the two best cards, both being declared in your hand.	That you have at least three more of the suit.

Leading the third best from second and third best has also the same significance; but as there is a good reason for thus playing—viz., the desirability of getting best out of partner's hand—it is not an artificial signal.

In addition to these, "Cavendish" has *invented* another signal which he calls "the plain-suit echo," to let his partner know when he holds four cards in the suit opened by partner. It would take too long to explain this fully, but it is important to note that "Cavendish" himself explains how the plain-suit echo clashes with some of the other signals, and consequently that you

must abandon one or the other. We have above emphasised the word "invented," because not only does it accurately explain the origin of these signals, but is the very expression used by Clay in reference to them.

The first point to notice as regards all these intimations is the severe strain on the attention that they absolutely require in order not to miss them. Thus, when our partner returns our suit we must notice the exact value of the card he plays, however small, so as to be able to compare it with the one he subsequently plays.

We must note the exact value of every card played by partner and adversaries to know whether, when not leading, they are calling for trumps, or when leading they are leading from five; and still further to gain certain definite information we must, as each trick is played, not merely count the cards played in the suit, but must carefully compare them with our own cards, and go through, as far as possible, the entire suit, to see whether we cannot tell or form some opinion as to how the remaining cards in it are held, and thus ferret out a penultimate, a call, or an echo of a call.

Now, nearly all this, as compared with natural Whist, is superfluous, and makes the game much more difficult and mentally laborious; and whilst no one would complain if it afforded greater scope for the reasoning powers, one feels that all, or nearly all, the strain falls on the power of attention, which is never pleasant in itself, and as a sign of mental power is not to be mentioned in the same breath as the power of reasoning; these signals, therefore, tend to give an advantage to

an inferior form of mental development, and one hardly to be called intellectual.

It is a curious confirmation of the above remarks that, since penning them, we have read in the Whist column of a weekly paper two suggestions; the one, that certain specified play should signify one thing, and the other, by a different contributor, that the same play should signify something quite different. We see from this, that unless players make a determined stand against such absurdities, the day is near when there will be rival systems of signals, some players adopting one and other players others, and the game be turned absolutely topsy-turvy.

M.

BUMBLEPUPPY.

It is singular that, being so fine a game as it is, Whist should be so little known. It is often said, indeed, that every one in England loves Whist. It would be truer to say that every one loves a game which is supposed to be Whist. But ninety-nine out of a hundred of those who suppose they play Whist hardly know what the game is. The game at which they really play has been called by the ingenious "Pembridge," Bumblepuppy. It is a sort of blunder-blindfold game, which must be interesting, I suppose, since so many play it. Nay, let us be honest. Even we who know what Whist is (which is by no means claiming to play finely) have most of us had a period of bumblepuppy. Can we not remember how we sat gravely down to what we called Whist? When our hands

were delivered to us, we set down in our minds each ace as a card to be led at the first opportunity. We had little fear about our kings; for we knew that the aces over them would be led out by the other players just as frankly as we should lead out our own. Even queens had a fair chance. But the single card was our chief delight. That was led out at once, and so our little trumps were safely made; for no one would think of leading out trumps while there seemed to be a chance of using any in ruffing. Somehow a trick made by ruffing seemed worth two made in any other way. If no chance came for a ruff, trumps were reserved to the last. But even then our game retained its beautiful simplicity of character. The ace came out first, then in due order the king and the queen. To have led a small card from ace, queen, and others, would have seemed wild audacity, which might indeed succeed at times, but was too imprudent to be encouraged.

This game, however, the Whist of the home circle and of Western America (in the Eastern States many Americans know true Whist "real well") is not Whist at all. It owes its interest solely to chance. A player of this bumblepuppy game, who has been lucky in getting a number of good hands, does indeed arrogate to himself the character of a good player. He seems to regard his luck as something due to personal influence. Indeed, oddly enough, while a good Whist-player, even if with a good partner he has to play against two bumblepuppy players, will never be assured of success, knowing how uncertain the chances are, you will generally find one of these know-nothings boasting confidently that he will win. Another way of recognising the Whist duffers is by their manner when the cards

favour them. A good player, when he and his partner have made five or six by cards, will not be loudly jubilant, though, touching on the help received from the cards, he may congratulate his partner on some successful stroke of strategy; but the player of bumblepuppy, when he and his partner, having all the honours and five out of six of the remaining high cards, have won the odd trick and so made a treble, will say, "He *knew* they would win," "He always *does* win," and otherwise take credit for a success which not even the skill of a Deschapelles could have managed to avert.

But though domestic Whist, or bumblepuppy, has "these violent delights" for its exponents, it is not a game worth playing or talking about.—R. A. Proctor, *Longman's Magazine*, Vol. v., No. 28, Feb., 1885.

THE DUKE OF CUMBERLAND'S FAMOUS HAND.

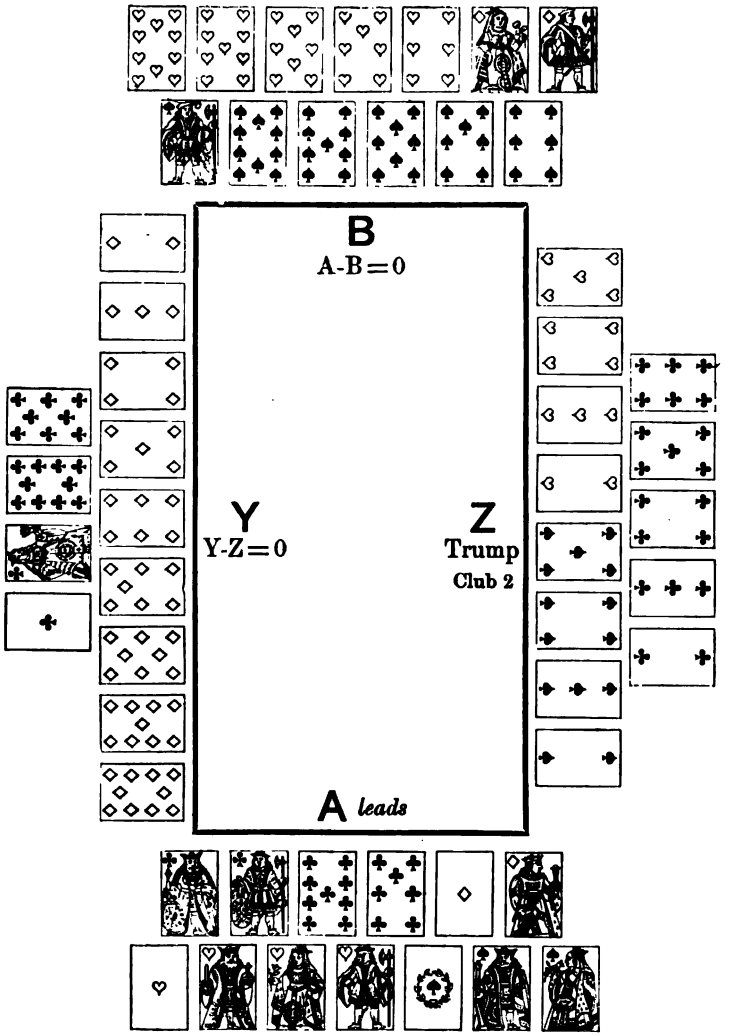
Of course chance has its part even in scientific Whist. In playing 30,000 rubbers, one of the finest living players of the game lost nearly 15,000, gaining only a balance of about 600 rubbers. Among the thousands of rubbers he lost, a goodly proportion must have been lost against bad play and by the sheer influence of cards—that is, of chance. There must be *some* villainous Whist-players living who can boast that they have played several rubbers against this fine player and won every rubber they played. Then, again, there is such a thing as good cards being beaten by sheer bad luck. Thus, there is that famous hand in which the Duke of

Cumberland held ace, king, queen, and knave in one plain suit; ace, king, queen, in another; ace, king, in the third; while in trumps he held king, knave, nine, and seven (of clubs); yet with this perfectly magnificent hand and the lead, leading also quite correctly, he did not make a single trick. This seems incredible, but the solution of the problem is readily seen by the card figures annexed. The four trumps lying just over those held by the Duke of Cumberland—viz., the ace, queen, ten, and eight, were on his left, with nine diamonds, while on his right were five small trumps. He led a trump which was taken on his left, and a diamond led —trumped on his right. Another trump was led through him, which was similarly taken, and another diamond led, which was also trumped on his right. Another trump led through the duke caused his last trump but one to fall; the last was then extracted by the player on his left. The duke had now no diamonds, that being the suit of which he had held only the ace and king. Then the diamonds on his left were as good as trumps, and made all the remaining tricks.

The duke is said to have lost a wager of £20,000 in connection with this hand.

A "YARBOROUGH" HAND.

Nearly every one who has played Whist must have had at times a Yarborough hand—that is, a hand in which there is no card above a nine. Pembridge says he has held three of these hands in the course of two



A (the Duke of Cumberland) having the lead, with this magnificent hand, and leading correctly, did not win a single trick.

hours; but this is, of course, altogether unusual. The name given to a hand of this sort is derived from a certain Lord Yarborough, who used to offer the attractive, but really very safe wager, of £1,000 to £1 that a hand of this sort would not be dealt. If Lord Yarborough had not calculated the chances (or had them calculated for him) he acted with little wisdom in betting at all on such a matter; but if he knew them he acted with little fairness in offering the odds he did. It will be found that one hand in about 1,828 is a Yarborough, so that Lord Yarborough ought to have wagered £1,827 to £1, instead of £1,000 to £1. It is said that he laid this wager many thousands of times. Supposing he offered £1,000 to £1 to each member of a Whist party for ten deals, on about ninety-one or ninety-two nights, in each of ten years, making in all about 36,560 wagers—*i.e.*, twenty times 1,828—he would have lost about twenty times, or £20,000, and won about £36,500, making a clear profit of about £16,500, or £1,650 per annum, by this seemingly reckless system of wagering.

MR. HENRY LABOUCHERE'S ODD TRICK.

Mr. Joseph Hatton, in his "Pens and Pencils of the Press," gives some amusing anecdotes of Mr. Labouchere's gambling adventures while in the diplomatic service. This includes the story of, perhaps, the most remarkable "Odd Trick" on record. So it is here preserved alongside the well-known "Cumberland" hand and other curiosities of the game:—

"The English attaché was fond of gambling, and he

takes pleasure, when in a conversational mood, in relating his troubles and adventures at cards. He once nearly starved, he says, owing to his passion for gambling.

"'While I was attaché at Washington,' he says, 'I was sent by the minister to look after some "Irish patriots" at Boston. I took up my residence at a small hotel, and wrote down "Smith" in the hotel book as my name. In the evening I went to a gambling establishment, where I incontinently lost all the money that I had with me except half-a-dollar. Then I went to bed, satisfied with my prowess. The next morning the bailiffs seized on the hotel for debt, and all the guests were requested to pay their bills and to take away their luggage. I could not pay mine, and so I could not take my luggage to another hotel. All that I could do was to write to Washington for a remittance and wait two days for its arrival. The first day I walked about and spent my half-dollar on food. It was summer, so I slept on a bench on the Common, and in the morning went to the bay to wash myself. I felt independent of all the cares and troubles of civilisation. But I had nothing with which to buy myself a breakfast. I grew hungry, and towards evening so exceedingly hungry that I entered a restaurant and ordered dinner, without any clear idea how I was to pay for it except by leaving my coat in pledge. In those days Boston restaurants were mostly in cellars, and there was a bar near the door where the proprietor sat to receive payment. As I ate my dinner, I observed that all the waiters, who were Irishmen, were continually staring at me, and evidently speaking of me to each other. A guilty conscience

made me think that this was because I had an impecunious look, and that they were discussing whether my clothes would cover my bill. At last one of them approached me and said, "I beg your pardon, sir; are you the patriot Meagher?" Now this patriot was a gentleman who had aided Smith O'Brien in his Irish rising and had been sent to Australia, and had escaped thence to the United States. It was my business to look after "patriots," so I put my finger before my lips and said, "Hush!" while I cast up my eyes to the ceiling, as though I saw a vision of Erin beckoning to me. It was felt at once that I was Meagher. The choicest viands were placed before me, and most excellent wine. When I had done justice to all the good things I approached the bar and asked boldly for my bill. The proprietor, also an Irishman, said, "From a man like you who has suffered in the good cause I can take no money; allow a brother patriot to shake you by the hand." I allowed him. I further allowed all the waiters to shake hands with me, and stalked forth with the stern, resolved, but somewhat condescendingly dismal air which I have seen assumed by patriots in exile. Again I slept on the Common, again I washed in the bay. Then I went to the post-office, found a letter for me from Washington with some money in it and breakfasted. . . . . .'

"Mr. Labouchere has brought to his work, as a writer and an editor, an amount of worldly experience and knowledge which serves him well and enriches his chatty criticisms of men and things with a variety of wayside illustration and incident which is the secret of his popular style. For example, when Khalil Pasha was recalled from being Ambassador in Paris because

he had been posted at a club for 40,000 francs which he had lost at Ecarté, Labouchere bubbled over with sympathy for him in *Truth*, and related how Khalil had begun life with £50,000 a year, but having his (Labouchere's) passion for gambling, had frittered most of it away. When he was Turkish Ambassador at St. Petersburg, he lost several million francs at Whist to the Russians about the Court, which he paid like a gentleman. 'He once saved me,' said Labouchere, 'from a heavy loss, and that is why I take an interest in him. He, a Russian, and I sat down one evening to have a quiet rubber. The Russians have a hideous device of playing with what they call a zero, that is to say, a zero is added to all winnings and losses, so that ten stands for a thousand, &c. When Khalil and the Russian had won their dummies, I found to my horror that with the zero I had lost about £4,000. Then it came to my turn to take dummy. I had won a game, and my opponents had won a game, and we were playing for the odd trick in the last game. If I had failed to win it, I should lose about £8,000. Only two cards remained in hand. I had marked up six tricks, and my opponents five. Khalil had the lead; he had the best trump and a thirteenth card. The only other trump was in the hands of the dummy. He had, therefore, only to play his trump and then the thirteenth card to win the rubber, when he let drop the latter card, for his fingers were of a very "thumby" description. Before he could take it up I pushed the dummy's trump on it, and claimed the trick. The Russian howled, Khalil howled; they said that this was very sharp practice. I replied that Whist is essentially a game of sharp practice, and that I was acting

in accordance with the rules. The lookers-on were appealed to, and, of course, gave it in my favour. Thus did I make, or rather save, £6,000, against Russia and Turkey in alliance, through the fault of the Turk; and it seems to me that the poor Ottoman, when later on he went to war (1877) with his ally of the card table, lost the game much as Khalil lost his game of Whist to me. To have good cards is one thing, to know how to make use of them quite another.'"

WHIST SPOILERS.

A SUGGESTION ON THE COUNT OF HONOURS.

Mr. A. Stuart contributes to *Temple Bar* (Vol. xcix., September, 1890) a short paper of remonstrance concerning that large class who win rubbers, in spite of bad play, simply through holding good cards. He observes:—

"Can anything be done to improve the Whist played by the ordinary Whist-player? We have a collection of elaborate and most exhaustive works on the game, with countless 'detailed leads,' 'specimen hands,' and 'later developments,' but no one seems to study them except those who already play well. The bad player will read nothing beyond the laws of the game; these are sufficient for his purpose, and 'Bumblepuppy' is more rampant than ever.

* * * * *

"It is really very extraordinary to think how easy it is to acquire a sufficient knowledge of the theory of

Whist, to make each game you play an intellectual pleasure to both yourself and your companions; and yet how very many spend hours nightly, risking considerable sums of money, and spoiling the pleasure of other people, who will not take the short time necessary to acquire this knowledge.

* * * * *

"The reason that so many men remain bad players, is that they do not lose often enough to make them take the trouble to become good players; or, perhaps, even to convince them that they *are* bad players; and it is the duty of all players, who wish to have any real enjoyment from the finest of all intellectual recreations, to take immediate steps to make the Whist spoilers improve their play, or else to force them from the Whist table altogether.

"Now I am convinced that this happy result can only be brought about by making them regular losers. They have had years of practice, and they will not improve; they have a splendid library of Whist literature, and they will not use it. Make them lose their money; they will then surely and certainly become Whist-players, or will leave Whist-players in peace. The way I propose to achieve this is that the leading clubs issue an ukase declaring that in future four by honours shall only count two points, and two by honours one point.

"Clay says if this were done the game would be 'perfect'; but, he adds, that the advantage of skill would be so great as to limit the number of players. I venture to say it would only limit the number of *bad* players, while it would largely increase the number of good players, as the bad players who were capable of

improvement would then have to take the trouble to improve.

"I appeal, then, to all good players in every club to make a stand in future, and only count half honours, which step I prophesy will do more to improve the playing of Whist than all the works that have been written on the subject.

"To the Whist spoilers I will give one word of advice. If the good players do not force you to join their ranks by the method I have advocated, then, for a few nights only, banish all 'maxims learned by rote' from your play, and try and follow two rules only.

"*First*, make your original lead from your longest suit, and return your partner's original lead with highest of two, or lowest of three (or more) remaining cards.

"*Second*, remember that your partner and adversaries are also strictly following this rule; so that you can deduce from the various leads and returns, not only what is held, but also *what is not held*. Try to do this, I say, for but a few nights, and you will soon find each trick become full of information; and then the whole beautiful theory to which you have been so long blind will gradually and surely open up before you—you will greedily devour the various works on the subject, and rapidly become a proficient at the game. You will thus have at your command an ever-varying and never-failing source of enjoyment, which will be always with you, in fair weather or in foul; in which bodily health, thank God, is not a factor, so long as the brain is sound; and in which—

'Man forgets his loves and debts,
And minds his griefs no more.'

from which fair horizon I trust the dark cloud of Whist spoilers may soon be banished."

A PROTEST AGAINST SIGNALS.

BY "MOGUL."

In *Knowledge* for 1885, "Mogul" (a *nom de plume* which veils a distinguished player), who is a determined enemy of "signals," took up the cudgels against what he considers the ruin of "the noble game." The following passages give the pith of his forcible argument:—

"As the one quality which gives Whist its greatest charm and favourably distinguishes it from Chess and Double Dummy is the exercise it affords of the faculty of reasoning from the known to the unknown, the introduction into the game of signals, which convey positive information without exercising the reason, cannot but be regarded as a great blot on, and as tending to lower the character of the game, and to make it less scientific; and Pole outrages one's common sense in calling modern Whist, when compared with the Whist of Mathews, Arnaud, Deschapelles, and others, the 'scientific game,' when, in fact, it is only the old really scientific game, with the addition of certain purely mechanical and unscientific dodges for giving information, known as signals.

"No wonder that Pembridge, in his last amusing and instructing brochure, 'The Decline and Fall of Whist,' which every Whist student should read, calls all the

signals 'wooden arrangements.' The term is apt, as the veriest blockhead, after one explanation, can make and understand a signal as well as the most skilful player, for the very essence of a signal is that, by virtue of a previous convention, it conveys certain definite information, and so entirely does the meaning of a signal depend upon a prior convention, that two of the signals—viz., the 'Peter' and the 'Penultimate'—conveyed at one time different information to that now conveyed by them. . . .

"It cannot be too clearly understood that signals are conventional modes of conveying information and nothing else, and that players can easily invent as many of them as they like, *e.g.*, two, or more, players can agree that an original lead of a card of a different colour to the trump card should indicate a strong hand; that the lead of the smallest but one of a suit should indicate that the leader held an honour in it, that the present mode of calling for trumps should indicate a desire to be forced, and so on; and one can see how two players playing frequently together, and practising their peculiar signals, could thereby gain a considerable pull over their adversaries. You (my readers) or I may consider that that would be cheating, but the inventors would, of course, deny it, and quote Clay as their justification, for does he not say, 'It is fair to give to your partner any intimation which could be given if the cards were placed on the table each exactly in the same manner as the others by a machine, the players being out of sight and hearing of each other.' And could not the suggested conventions be as well played in the manner he thus specifies as fair, as any of the existing conventions? Certainly they could,

and thus it comes home to us that Clay's argument, which has so constantly been relied on as establishing the fairness of signals, is unsound, and even if it be considered that he assumed that signals were only 'fair' when known to or played by the other players, we should still feel—and I doubt not that every honourable man does feel—that to make use of signals against players who had never heard of them, and who, even if they had the genius of a Deschapelles, could not by any process of reasoning infer their exact meaning, would be unfair, and only a shade less unfair to use them against adversaries who might have heard of, but had never practised them, for the power of noticing the signals grows by practice, and a beginner is unable to discover them except by diverting his attention from other matters. . . .

"The only reason for their introduction that I can think of is, that the conflict between rational and artificial play which they necessarily cause, as well as the additional information which they give, make the game more intricate and difficult, and thus give professors of it an increased (and, as I think, undue) advantage over amateurs; or, as 'Cavendish' more delicately puts it: 'No doubt moderate players may lack the quick perception which would enable them to take advantage of the American rules. This is no reason why better players should be deprived of that advantage!' Certainly not, if the better players only played with their equals, or if they never played for money with the moderate ones; but some of us, at any rate, will think that after this 'Cavendish' and the other better players who, not satisfied with natural advantages over moderate players, invent or practise artificial leads

which increase these advantages, should, in fairness, give moderate players odds; and I shall wait with curiosity to hear if they do. They are making it a case of professionals *versus* amateurs. We are thus reduced to this proposition, that the adoption of signals either gives no advantage to one player over another, or an unfair advantage to the better players; if the latter, they ought to be avoided without further argument, and, if the former, there is no reason for introducing them. The game is a splendid game without them, and why not leave well alone?

"One of the fairest and best tests whether signals improve the game or not, is to suppose that the construction of the game were so altered as to permit partners to give information (the sole object of signals) by showing to the table such cards as they chose, and this is just what 'Cavendish' says he would like to do. Just consider how this most perfect way of giving information would largely deprive players of the opportunities of exercising their judgment or ingenuity. A and B being partners; A showing B king, queen, and three small clubs; B would at once show ace and a small one of the same suit, so that A might know that he could safely start with a small one. Again, A leading a suit, and remaining after one round with the second and third best and others, would show them, so that B, if he held the best, might get out of his way; whereupon B, if he had the best or fourth best, would at once show it to save A wasting one of his two good ones, and so on. Now would this be an improvement on Whist as it is? I think most decidedly not.

"At present Whist is a pleasant recreation, whilst Double Dummy and Chess are hard work, and the

suggested alteration would assimilate Whist to Double Dummy and make that a toil which is intended for pleasure. In this view I am not peculiar, for even F. H. Lewis, notwithstanding a deplorable readiness to adopt signals, says 'the present tendency of Whist is to approximate the game more closely to Chess, by which Whist will lose not only its individual, but also its special educational character, and by which, as a game of relaxation, it will soon be a game of the past. . . .'

"The two old signals of the call for trumps, and the return to a partner's lead, are doubtless too firmly established to be now ignored, but if the rising generation of players resolutely oppose the adoption of new signals, and give more thought to the special character of Whist, it may be hoped that these too will gradually fall into disuse, and that really scientific Whist based, and based only, on rational deduction, will resume its sway, and instruct and amuse in the future even more generations of Englishmen than it has in the past."

LADIES' WHIST—A CURIOUS DEVELOPMENT.

A writer in *The Spectator*, January 10th, 1891, thus sarcastically handles a freak of our American sisters and ladies' play in general:—

"There came from America a treatise upon Whist, containing certain theories which were the subject of hot debate among our Whist-players at home, and which are still known and referred to as 'American leads.'

"The latest ideas that have been contributed by the United States on the subject of the game are hardly so useful or worthy of discussion; but as they throw a curious and unexpected light upon a game played by ladies—which is not Whist, although they call it by that name—we are unwilling to let them pass altogether in silence.

"It would appear from the American papers that the ladies of New York have decided that Whist is an excellent opportunity for displaying the charms of their persons, and are become so enamoured of the game in consequence, that there is a most unusual and fashionable demand among them for professors of the art. These professors are required to teach them, not how to play a hand, but how to display a pretty hand and arm to the greatest advantage: a suit of diamonds is not more necessary in the pack than a suit of diamonds upon their fingers; and the privilege of dealing ranks second to that of shuffling cards. They require a professor to teach them Whist in the same way as Mr. Turveydrop, late lamented professor of deportment, would have taught them to play lawn-tennis.

"This latest development of Whist-playing is not likely to add to the science of the game; but, as it throws a curious side-light upon 'ladies' Whist' in general, it is worthy of consideration.

"What we call 'ladies' Whist,' what Charles Lamb called 'sick Whist,' and what we have heard an elderly and morose Whist-player describe as 'bumblepuppy' —a word with a dark but suggestive meaning—are all practically the same game—a very pleasant game, but not Whist in the strictest sense of the word.

"We would not suggest that ladies cannot play the strict game; on the contrary, some of them play it remarkably well—witness the celebrated Sarah Battle, for instance. But it cannot be denied that the average lady Whist-player is addicted to play that is rather peculiar than scientific. . . . .

"She will invariably try to cheat in cutting for partners, for she cannot bear to leave so important a choice to be decided by chance. In dealing, she will begin with the greatest care and deliberation, but suddenly there will occur to her mind a story, which, with much animation, she will proceed to relate until the trump is turned up in the wrong place. She can never be persuaded that she has misdealt until the cards have been carefully counted at least three times. Another time she will beg her partner to deal for her, and overwhelm him with reproachful glances should he turn up a small card for the trump.

"It is easy to know whether she has taken up a good or an indifferent hand: if it be a good one, she never tires of contemplating it, will arrange and rearrange it a hundred times, while she fingers with ill-concealed impatience the card that she wishes to play; if it looks but an indifferent one, she too will assume an air of indifference, will gaze with an abstracted look into the further corners of the room, and drum upon the table with the fingers of one hand, while the other holds the cards carelessly shut up in a pack.

"If she has five trumps in her hand, she will not lead them—no, nothing will induce her to lead them, not even if her partner has called for them. He is ill-advised if he remonstrates with her afterwards. She looks at him with the sweetest wonder in her eyes, as

she protests that she never *heard* him. *En revanche*, in the course of the next game she will trump his best card, and gather up the trick with a beaming smile of genial triumph. To do her justice, she does not often revoke; when she does revoke, she discovers her offence with the prettiest air of defiance imaginable, and at least ten minutes' discussion, combined with the display of all the back tricks, are needed before it can be proved to her satisfaction—even then she has a great deal to say, and leaves it to be finally understood that not she herself, but her partner, has been most to blame in this matter. Indeed, he is fortunate if the matter is allowed to rest then, and if he is not subjected to a spirited homily on the misleading nature of his play.

"She loves, above all things, to make what she calls a good trick—that is to say, a trick with lots of court cards in it. If the two of spades be led, followed by the four, she will play a knave, even though she has the ace in hand, because she cannot bear to waste the latter upon two such insignificant cards; and it is with feelings of unbounded indignation that she sees the trick fall to the queen of the fourth hand. The feelings of her partner who led from a king need not be described, because his feelings, of course, are not worth mentioning.

"She also loves to score by honours, but she cannot endure that her adversaries should hold them; if they do so too often, she will have grave doubts as to the advisability of counting honours at all, and will give vent to some very serious reflections upon the relative value of good hands and good play, of blind chance and science. The simple rules of scoring she can never master; she generally requests her partner to mark

the score, but that does not prevent her from challenging the correctness of the result, should it not be in her favour.

"Of all her propensities the most curious, the most ineradicable, is the one that prompts her to hoard her trumps. Nothing, as we have already said, can induce her to lead them. She prefers to save them up as a kind of *bonne bouche*, a display of fireworks for the end of the game. She looks upon them as things that are too precious for use; she regards them with a superstitious reverence. Should her partner lead them, 'What? trumps!' she exclaims in a tone of pained surprise at his wasteful audacity; she will play her card grudgingly, and take the trick perhaps, but she will not return his lead—no, she cannot bring herself to return his lead.

"There was an eminent Whist-player, of whom it was related that, whenever he found himself seated at the Whist table with ladies, he used to tell them the following tale as a kind of prologue to the game:—'I once knew a lady who held five trumps in her hand, and who failed to lead them. She ended sadly;'—and here his voice sank to an impressive whisper—'she died in the workhouse.' Whether or not this precautionary measure was attended with success, tradition does not say; we should be inclined to doubt its efficacy.

"But to sum up our lady Whist-player: she is delightful, she is charming, she is everything that is good and beautiful to look upon, but she cannot be brought to regard Whist as a serious science; as a partner of our joys and our woes, as a partner of everything else in life, she is immeasurably too good for us, but as a

partner at Whist she leaves much to be desired—at Whist one would gladly see her the partner of one's worst enemy, and then make the stakes as high as possible."

WHIST AS AN INTELLECTUAL PASTIME—SIMILARITY TO THE GAME OF LIFE.

Whist, in a pre-eminent degree, exacts the exercise of a large range of faculties—and faculties, too, of a very varied and dissimilar order. It is very common to hear a preference accorded to Chess over Whist, on the ground that in Chess no element of chance enters, and that the whole conduct of the game is resolvable to mathematical certainty. Now, it is precisely for this very difference that we claim the superiority for Whist. It is in this same element of chance that Whist so closely resembles real life. It is in this same element of what may or may not be, that we have a field for the exercise of those powers which calculate probabilities, and argue from the likely or unlikely, and draw conclusions from premises not absolutely certain, but still as probable as are the greater number of the unaccomplished events in our actual lives. If there be a game which sets the fine edge on the reasoning powers of the man of the world—of him who is to be conversant with the daily incidents of life, and those who set them in motion—it is Whist. Show me a first-rate Whist-player, and I will engage to show you a man to whose knowledge of the world, to whose tact, to whose powers of computing the cost of any action,

and striking the balance of advantage or disservice it might entail, you may apply in a moment of doubt or difficulty. Show me a first-rate Whist-player, and you show me one who combines patient powers of a judicial order with the energetic rapidity of a man of action; who has the keenest appreciation of the laws of evidence, along with the steady courage of a soldier; and in whose balanced intellect no undue prominence is ever accorded to one class of faculties at the expense of another.

I know that a great many people—excellent people, estimable in every way—will regard what I say here as exaggeration, and will exclaim, "What absurdity it is to talk of such qualities as these being enlisted in a mere game!" A mere game! And what, may I ask, are the daily-recurring difficulties of life but mere games? Is not every operation of commerce, every speculation, every lawsuit, a game? Is not every occasion in which man is pitted against man, and intelligence pitted against intelligence, a game? Does not Fortune deal out cards to us every day we live? and are we not triumphant in our trumps or manfully struggling under the difficulties of a bad hand?

Don't despise the faculties employed upon a mere game, unless you be prepared to disparage the qualities which are daily exercised in the great affairs of life. They are precisely the self-same forces, though they be swayed with different intentions.

Games are, I insist, far more intellectual as pastimes, better as stimulants, better as reliefs to the actual drudgery of life, than the great majority of those "conversations" which people assume to be the acme of social culture, and which are, for the most part, made

up of repetitions and reiterations. It is often of great consequence to relieve an overworked brain—to relax the tension of overstrained faculties. Absolute rest will not suffice. There is a certain amount of intellectual activity required; and, just as we see that a man can sit longer without fatigue in a spring-carriage than he could rest in the best-stuffed arm-chair, so it is there is more real rest imparted by moderate occupation than by total inertness. A game will do this—a game will call for a certain activity of mind stimulated by a constant interest; and it is in the alternate play of occupation and amusement a really active mind will take its most pleasurable repose. The rapid results keep the faculties awake and in the interest of the play; a man learns to forget what all the solicitudes of friends, and all the blandishments of beauty, were not able to banish from his brooding imagination.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

BAD PARTNERS.

I am confident I should not have had a grey hair in my head these ten years to come, if it were not for that wretch who refused to lead back my trump in order that he might make one miserable trick by a ruff. The "second murderer," too, who never will lead twice for the same suit, has aged me more than all my gout.

As to the fatuous imbecile that, when he plays a card, always looks at his partner, and never once at the board, there is not a club in Europe without some

dozens of them. And are they not a heavy infliction! There are others who cannot be taught the manual part of the game, but are constantly dropping cards, playing out of turn, or, heresy of heresies, mistaking the trump! The defaulter is posted who merely defrauds you of your money; and here is a fellow who impairs your digestion, sets your nerves ajar, and actually curdles the whole milk of your existence, suffered to go free and unpunished!

There is a moral obliquity in certain Whist-players far more significant than all the elevations on the frontal bone, or the bumps on the occiput. How I wish I could draw attention to this point—how I wish I could make men alive to the fact that Whist has its ethical side; and that, as an indication of a man's nature, of his tendencies to hope or to despair—of his self-reliance, of his boldness, of his timidity, or dependence, there never yet was invented a gauge to be compared to this game. Don't sneer at this, and say, Pshaw! it is a mere pastime: so it is, but it is a pastime every step of which unfolds a trait; and as an episode, a man's rubber is as complete as any incident that ever befell him.—ANON.

NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AS DISPLAYED IN THE ROYAL GAME.

I opine that the Jockey Club in Paris has players of a certainly more brilliant order than any we can match against them in our country. In the Dummy Game the Germans are unquestionably our superiors. Both

French and Germans are bolder than we are, more prone to play out trumps, and start earlier in "stride," so to say, than we do, who usually keep the "rush" for the end of the game, and are satisfied with scoring the trick—winning the "heat" where we ought to have won the "race."

The notion of "first saving the game before you think of winning it" is totally subversive of all that combination by which a really good player manages to play out in imagination two or three different issues to his "hand" before he deposits a card on the table. He who cannot do this, and who cannot do it as rapidly, as instinctively, as he arranges his cards in his hand, is no Whist-player.

Nor is the dashing character of the French game so hazardous as men deem it generally. The frank lead of trumps is just as often security as rashness; and particularly in this case when the player, perceiving that his own share of the combat must be that of a subordinate, at once devotes his whole strength to the support of his stronger partner. In this quick, almost instinctive appreciation of the part assigned to him by fortune, the French player is vastly superior to the English. Your French partner's lead is a candid declaration of what amount of strength he can contribute to the struggle. He says, "Count upon me for this; do not depend on me for that." Your own fault must it be if you have to complain afterwards of disappointment.

Since Deschapelles there has been no such player in Europe, except perhaps a Greek—a M. Kalergi, the brother of the minister of that name. His play, I am convinced, has no equal amongst the present race of

Whisters. It combined every quality of intrepidity and caution, and had, besides, a recuperative power, by which, when he discovered a particular line of attack or defence impracticable, he adopted another with instantaneous rapidity, and often with such adroitness, too, as to mislead the adversary, who still believed him in pursuit of his former intention.

Another great gift was his: which was to measure —and almost in a moment—the capacity of his partner; to divine all his peculiarities, and to note all the prejudices he possessed. His power of adapting himself to the ever-varying caprices of his partners was an exhibition of mental dexterity that resembled the skill of an Indian juggler with his balls. This, however amusing to witness, conveyed no teaching to the Whist-player who looked over him—no more than the skill of a particular physician in his detection of disease advances the science of medicine; these things belong to the individual; they are not a portion of the art.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

ORIGIN OF "THE LITTLE SCHOOL"—AMERICAN LEADS.

In an interesting article which appeared in *Harper's Magazine* for March, 1891, Mr. N. B. Trist, whose name is so closely connected with "American Leads," gives a narrative of the doings of "The Little Whist School," which shows how "Cavendish" came to the front in Whist literature:—

"In the early part of this century Short Whist came into existence, by the points of the game being altered

from ten to five, and the calling of honours abolished. Mr. Clay gives an account of how this occurred, in his delightful little work on Whist, which should be in the hands of every earnest player.

"The next important development was the call for trumps. It was first introduced, some fifty years ago, at Graham's, a great card club in London. Lord Henry Bentinck, a player of high repute, is credited with its invention. He is said to have afterwards bitterly regretted his ingenuity, which had deprived him of much of the advantage which he derived from superior play, by making the game easier for the moderate player. Although it is admitted that the call for trumps was evolved from certain correct principles of play, yet it is considered by the best authorities to be no improvement. One thing, however, is certain—it has added much interest to the game for the beginner.

"We now come to an event in the history of Whist, apparently insignificant, but which was fraught with the future welfare of the game, for it produced 'Cavendish.'

"This event was the coming together of the 'knot of young men,' who played Whist at Cambridge, and afterwards in London, between 1850 and 1860, referred to by Dr. William Pole, in the introduction to his 'Philosophy of Whist.'

"The facts concerning this 'Little Whist School,' so far as I have been able to ascertain them, are, that shortly after 1850, Mr. Daniel Jones, brother of 'Cavendish,' and others, some of whom are mentioned below, used to play Whist at Cambridge in much the same way as other young men. It seems that, con-

trary to the general impression, Mr. Henry Jones, afterwards so well known under the pseudonym of 'Cavendish,' was not of the party, as he was then pursuing his medical studies at St. Bartholomew's College, in London. After these gentlemen had taken their degrees, they and 'Cavendish' used to meet in London, about the year 1854. The regular players were Mr. Edward Wilson, J.P., Mr. W. Dundas Gardiner, Mr. Daniel Jones, and Mr. Henry Jones. Although others used to join in the play at times, the four named formed the backbone of the 'Little School.' When these four met, they used to play every hand through to the end for the sake of science, and also for the purpose of making certain calculations. They, moreover, wrote down a variety of interesting hands. It was in the nature of things that these four Whist enthusiasts, who were young men of 'considerable ability,' as Dr. Pole calls them, should argue, and that they should not always agree. They had the advantage over most beginners of being able to refer disputed points to the late James Clay, then the acknowledged authority on Whist. The cases were written down and submitted to Mr. Clay through the medium of Mr. Henry Derviche Jones, F.R.C.S., father of 'Cavendish,' who happened at that time to be chairman of the Portland Club, the headquarters of English Whist, where he often met Mr. Clay.

"About 1860, the 'Little School' ceased to meet, owing to circumstances over which the members had no control. A number of manuscripts which had accumulated were thrown into a drawer, and there they would probably have remained to this day, but for the following accident:

"In *Macmillan's Magazine* of December, 1861, appeared an article, 'Games at Cards for the Coming Winter.' It was signed 'W. P.' In the course of the article the following passage occurred: 'It would be a great boon if some good authority would publish a set of model games of Whist, with explanatory remarks, such as are found so useful in Chess, for example.'

"The future 'Cavendish,' having read this article, wrote to W. P. that he happened to have a number of Whist hands in manuscript, and should be happy to lend them to him. He received a reply from Dr. William Pole, F.R.S., saying that he would like to see the hands.

"Before forwarding, 'Cavendish' thought he would just read the hands over. He found the 'Little School' had taken so much for granted that the MSS. would probably be unintelligible to Dr. Pole. Thus, if A led from his strong suit, no remark was made about it; or if B, when returning his partner's lead, and holding the three and the two, returned the three in preference to the two, no reason was given for it. So 'Cavendish' began to rewrite. In order to avoid repetition, he erected some of the instructions into principles, to which he referred as occasion required. He also added a few elementary reasons for each line of play. Dr. Pole examined the MS., and wrote to the effect that its contents were a revelation to him, and that Jones ought to publish; so as 'Cavendish,' the name of his then club, he rushed into print, in 1862, with a modest 250 copies. The rest every Whist-player knows. His 'Laws and Principles of Whist' has now passed its seventieth thousand (twenty-

odd editions). So much for an accident. But to return to the 'Little School.'

"It was first so christened by a writer in the *Quarterly Review* of January, 1871. Then a storm arose. The late Abraham Hayward wrote to the *Morning Post* to say that none of the most celebrated players of the day were aware of the existence of this school. That was not surprising, considering that the players named had no idea they formed a school until after the publication of the *Quarterly*, when they 'awoke and found themselves famous.' Hayward added, in the *Post*, 'Did these young men originate or elaborate or compass anything, or did they merely arrange what was well known and procurable before?' To this 'Cavendish' replied, 'What I claim for the Little School is that in one book we gave for the first time the reasoning on which the principles of Whist-play are based, logically and completely.' It does not appear that the 'Little School' originated any alterations worthy of record. These came later, as we will see further on.

"In consequence, doubtless, of the reputation achieved by him through his book, 'Cavendish' was given charge of the card department of the London *Field* in December, 1862. This was a most fortunate occurrence, as it contributed not a little to the subsequent unity and stability of the game, by making the *Field* the medium through which all improvements or alterations are suggested, discussed, adopted, or rejected, as the case may be."

The subject of "American leads" is now one which may be said to have a literature of its own. Mr. Trist gives the rules for American leads as follows:—

"1. When you open a strong suit with a low card, lead the fourth-best.

"2. When you open a strong suit with a high card, and next lead a low card, lead the original fourth-best, ignoring in the count any high card marked in your hand.

"3. When you remain with two high indifferent cards, lead the higher, if you opened a suit of four; the lower if you opened a suit of more than four."

CARDS SPIRITUALISED.

The following curious article is taken from an English newspaper of the year 1773, and is there called the "Perpetual Almanac; or, Soldier's Prayer Book," by Richard Lane, a private soldier, belonging to the 42nd Regiment, who was taken before the Mayor of Glasgow for playing cards during divine service:—

The sergeant commanded the soldiers to church, and when the parson read his prayers and took his text, those who had a Bible took it out; but this soldier had neither a Bible nor a Common Prayer Book, but pulling out a pack of cards, he spread them out before him. He first looked at one card and then at another.

The sergeant of the company saw him, and said:

"Richard, put up the cards; this is no place for them."

"Never mind that," said Richard.

When the service was over the constable took Richard prisoner and brought him before the mayor.

"Well," said the mayor, "what have you brought this soldier here for?"

"For playing cards in church."

"Well, soldier, what have you to say for yourself?"

"Much, sir, I hope."

"Very good; if not, I will punish you more than ever man was punished."

"I have been," said the soldier, "about six weeks on the march; I have neither Bible nor Common Prayer Book; I have nothing but a common pack of cards, and I hope to satisfy your worship of the purity of my intentions."

"Very good," said the mayor.

Then, spreading the cards before the mayor, he began with the ace.

"When I see the ace, it reminds me there is but one God.

"When I see the deuce, it reminds me of Father and Son.

"When I see the trey, it reminds me of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

"When I see the four, it reminds me of the four evangelists that preached, viz., Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

"When I see the five, it reminds me of the five wise virgins that trimmed their lamps. There were ten, but five were fools and were sent out.

"When I see the six, it reminds me that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth.

"When I see the seven, it reminds me that on the seventh day God rested from the works He had made, and hallowed it.

"When I see the eight, it reminds me of the eight righteous persons that were saved when God drowned the world, viz., Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives.

"When I see the nine, it reminds me of the nine lepers that were cleansed by our Saviour. There were ten, but nine never returned thanks.

"When I see the ten, it reminds me of the Ten Commandments, which God handed down to Moses on a table of stone.

"When I see the king, it reminds me of the great King of Heaven, which is God Almighty.

"When I see the queen, it reminds me of the Queen of Sheba, who went to hear the wisdom of Solomon, for she was as wise a woman as he a man. She brought with her fifty boys and fifty girls, all dressed in boy's apparel, for King Solomon to tell which were girls. King Solomon sent for water for them to wash themselves; the girls washed to the elbows, and the boys only to the wrists, so King Solomon told by this."

"Well," said the mayor, "you have given a description of every card in the pack except one."

"What is that?" asked the soldier.

"The knave," said the mayor.

"I will give your honour a description of that, too, if you will not be angry."

"I will not," said the mayor, "if you will not term me to be a knave."

"Well," said the soldier, "the greatest knave that I know of is the constable who brought me here."

"I do not know," said the mayor, "whether he is the greatest knave, but I know he's the greatest fool."

"When I count how many spots in a pack, I find

three hundred and sixty-five—as many as there are days in the year.

"When I count the number of cards in a pack, I find there are fifty-two—as many weeks as there are in a year; and I find four suits—the number of weeks in the month.

"I find there are twelve picture cards in the pack, representing the number of months in the year; and counting the tricks, I find thirteen—the number of weeks in a quarter. So you see, sir, the pack of cards serves for a Bible, almanac, and Common Prayer Book to me."

THE MORALITY OF CARD-PLAYING.

BY "CAVENDISH."

Author of "The Laws and Principles of Whist."

Card-playing is associated in the minds of many excellent people with all kinds of wickedness. Gambling, cheating, quarrelling, swearing, and many other vicious doings are unsparingly attributed to the card-table. To our thinking, cards, properly used, are harmless instruments of social relaxation. It is no argument for *our* refraining from playing at cards that *others* have made a bad use of them. As well might we all turn teetotallers because many people have suffered from *delirium tremens*. We believe that the unsatisfactory associations connected with card-playing have arisen solely from the abuse of cards, and not from any evil qualities necessarily inherent in them.

Before we proceed to our own views on the question of the morality of card-playing, we will briefly examine

the ideas of some other writers who have recorded their opinions on this subject. Many authors—some of eminent virtue and piety—have come to the conclusion that cards may be played for amusement, and even for moderate stakes, without any sacrifice of expediency.

In the reign of James I. a singular theological controversy arose regarding the lawfulness of deciding matters by lot and of playing at games of chance. The most celebrated of the disputants was a bachelor of divinity, named Thomas Gataker. He wrote a treatise "On the Nature and Use of Lots," 1619. Gataker argues that games of chance are nowhere forbidden in the Scriptures; and he contends that they are not evil of themselves, though admitting that they are liable to great abuse. This abuse he earnestly condemns; but he denies that it is a necessary consequence of the admission of lots or chance into games and amusements.

Jean Barbeyrac, in his "Traite du Jeu," 1710, comes to the conclusion that games of chance are not immoral, whether the stakes are small or great! He states that though man was not sent into the world to pass his whole time in merry-making, yet it was not intended that he should labour incessantly. He must take recreation in order to make progress with his work. Rest is the seasoning of labour, and man ought to combine the two, taking as his guide Nature, who marks the hours of labour and repose by alternations of light and darkness. Barbeyrac continues, "There are, however, people who unreasonably suppose that use and abuse cannot be separated. They form a mystical notion of virtue and piety, and would persuade us that

all diversions are unworthy of reasonable beings. . . . Such persons aspire to a state of perfection which is beyond the reach of human nature. . . . I maintain that for the sake of relaxation any amusements which are free from vice may be indulged in. This being admitted, if a person finds pleasure in playing at Billiards, Tennis, Chess, Cards, Backgammon, and even Dice, why may he not amuse himself with them as well as in promenading, with music, in the chase, in fishing, in drawing, and in a thousand similar ways? The question then remains, 'Do you approve of playing for a stake?' If there is no stake there is certainly no semblance of criminality, and if there is a stake I do not see why there should be any evil in it if we look at the matter in a proper light." The light in which Barbeyrac looks at playing for money is, however, defensible. He says that play is a sort of contract, and that a man has a right to make a contract to dispose of his property as he pleases. But Barbeyrac is mistaken; a man has not that right. Suppose, for instance, that one wealthy fool loses to another the whole of his property, the contract between them being that he was to be the winner who should stand the longest on one leg. The law would not enforce the contract, and very properly so; for to hold the loser to the original bargain would cause a greater injury to society than allowing him to repudiate it.

Jeremy Taylor says that many fierce declamations have been uttered against cards and dice, but they are only applicable when our sports come to excess. Then we spoil the sport; it is no longer a recreation, but a sin. With respect to playing for money, he observes, "When money is at stake either the sum is trifling or

it is considerable. If trifling, it can be of no purpose, unless to serve the ends of some little entertainment or love-feast, and then there is nothing amiss; but if considerable, a wide door is open to temptation, and a man cannot be indifferent to win or lose a great sum of money, though he can easily pretend it. . . . If without money he cannot mind his game, then the game is no divertisement, no recreation, but the money is all the sport, and therefore covetousness is all the design; but if he can be recreated by the game alone, the money does but change it from lawful to unlawful, and the man from being weary to become covetous, and from the trouble of labour or study remove him to the worst trouble of fear, or anger, or impatient desires. Here begins the mischief; here men begin for the money to use vile arts; here cards and Dice begin to be diabolical; when players are witty to defraud and undo one another, when estates are ventured, and families are made sad by a poor and luckless chance. . . . 'They who make a pastime of a neighbour's ruin are the worst of men,' said the comedy. But concerning the loss of our money, let a man pretend what he will, that he plays for no more than he is willing to lose, it is certain that we ought not to believe him; for if that sum is so indifferent to him, why is not he easy to be tempted to give such a sum to the poor? Whenever this is the case he sins that games for money beyond an inconsiderable sum. Let the stake be nothing, or almost nothing, and the cards or dice are innocent."

There is only one objection to be made to this charming statement of the case. It is this: Taylor fails to perceive the distinction between the sum risked on each game and the expectation of gain or

loss on a series of games. Many persons who can afford to play, say, penny points at Whist, could not afford to give, say, sixpence to the poor at the conclusion of every rubber, whether they won or lost it; the tax would be altogether out of proportion to the means of the individual. The player expects to win some rubbers and to lose others; and at the end of a considerable number of rubbers played during say a twelvemonth, he expects to be in or out of pocket but a few pence, a few shillings, or at the most a pound or so. If he has lost a pound he has paid very cheaply for a year's pleasure; if he has won a pound he may, like Parson Dale, in "My Novel," treat himself to the additional gratification of distributing it in charity.

Nelson, the pious author of the "Practice of True Devotion," had no objection to cards, provided that "persons do not make a business of what they should only use as a diversion."

The Rev. Augustus Toplady, well known for his high Calvinistic principles, thought that the clergy might innocently indulge in cards. He had a high opinion of Gataker's work, which he says was professedly written to prove the lawfulness of card-playing under due restrictions and limitations. Mr. Toplady proceeds, "I cannot condemn the vicar of Broad Hembury (*i.e.*, himself) for relaxing himself now and then among a few friends with a rubber of sixpenny Whist, a pool of penny Quadrille, or a few rounds of twopenny Pope Jean. To my certain knowledge the said vicar has been cured of headache by one or other of those games, after spending eight, ten, or twelve, and sometimes sixteen hours in his study. Nor will he ask any man's leave for so unbending himself, because another

person's conscience is no rule to his any more than another person's stature or complexion."

Dr. Johnson regretted that he had not learnt to play at cards, and for this reason, which is given in Boswell's "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides": "It is very useful in life; it generates kindness, and consolidates society." Talleyrand's well-known *mot* respecting Whist is to the same effect: "Vous ne savez pas le Whiste, jeune homme; qu'elle triste vieillesse vous vous preparez!"

Chatto, in discussing the morality of card-playing in his work on "Playing Cards," says that in cases where high stakes are played for, the money being risked more in the way of traffic than of amusement, gaming is a positive evil to society; and that it is utterly inexcusable and unjustifiable on any grounds whatever. "When a victim is stripped, his individual loss is of but small moment to society; the true evil is a politico-economical one, viz., that portions of the national wealth created by the industry of others should be at the disposal of such a character, and that they should pass to one probably more worthless than himself."

This view is just, and is very near the truth; but it leaves undetermined how far playing for money may be harmlessly indulged in. This question is of considerable importance.

All games, whether played with cards or with other instruments, may be classed as (1) games of skill; (2) games of chance; and (3) mixed games. This classification was dilated on at page 36. The first and second classes were rejected in favour of the third; games of skill exciting too much interest, games of chance too little, unless large sums of money are at

stake. It should be observed that popular games have almost always been mixed games. Such, in the case of cards, are Ombre, Quadrille, Boston, Whist, Piquet, and Cribbage. In these chance and skill enter in such ratio that a considerable part of the time taken up by the game is a period of comparative rest; and the remainder is pleasantly occupied in watching the chances, and in endeavouring to turn them in our favour by the exercise of skill. Hence arises the interest felt in the game; and the best card-games are so well compounded that without fatiguing the players they afford materials for keen and healthy enjoyment.

Yet, it may be argued, these games are generally played for a stake. If they are so enjoyable for their own sake why is a stake almost invariably added to them? It is true that they are generally played for a *small* stake. The use of the stake is to define the interest of the game. It is quite the exception that scientific games, such as Whist, are played for any amount of consequence. It is not the amount that increases the pleasure of the players; indeed, most of those who play their domestic rubber would feel very uncomfortable if a large sum of money depended on the result. But there is just the difference between playing for something or for nothing that there is between purpose or no purpose. Take any other occupation—riding or driving. We want an hour's horse or carriage exercise. We do not ride round and round in a circle. We at once propose some kind of object: "Let us go and see such and such a person or place." We have no particular call in one direction more than another, but we feel more interest in our ride or drive if we go somewhere or do something.

The question may be put, "What do you mean by a *small* stake? What limit do you propose? Where does 'defining interest' end and gambling begin?" This is a question not easy to answer. In the opinion of the writer the limit depends on the means of the players. As long as it is a matter of perfect indifference to the players whether they win or lose the sum staked, so long are they without the pale of gambling. The moment they begin to feel anxious on account of the amount depending on the result, then the sooner they reduce the stakes the better. It is clear that what would be gambling in a clerk at £100 a year need not be gambling in a man of considerable fortune. The good sense of the community generally fixes the stakes at a reasonable sum, in accordance with the definition just laid down. Thus, to take the case of Whist, the domestic rubber is generally played for "heads" or for "silver threepennies"; among well-to-do professional men the regulation points are generally "shillings," with perhaps an extra half-crown on the rubber; while at clubs, where money flows more easily, half-crown points are common. At crack clubs, where the members are many of them men of wealth, higher points are to be met with.

No doubt there is the temptation to people of moderate incomes to play "high" when they are introduced into circles where money is played for. Thus, De Smith is a man of family, and, as such, a member of the Coronet Club, where high stakes are played. But De Smith is poor. If De Smith is so fond of a rubber that he must wander into the card-room, the sooner he retires from the club the better. He should avoid temptation by joining another club where the points

are lower. De Smith's position as a tempted man is by no means peculiar; there are temptations in every path in life. There is the temptation to the trader to overtrade his capital; to the banker or the broker to speculate in various securities; to the man of property to live expensively and beyond his income. But no one will argue hence that commercial pursuits and the possession of private means are in themselves evils. Properly employed, they are blessings. And thus we return to the point from which we started, that card-playing, in common with almost all occupations and amusements, may be wisely and honestly used, or foolishly and wickedly abused.

TEACHING WHIST.

One of the most curious of recent social phenomena is the success which has attended the attempts to teach Whist in classes, both in this city and in Boston, last winter, and during the past summer at some of the watering-places. It has been found, as a matter of fact, that a good Whist-player, possessed of fair teaching capacity, has no difficulty in getting pupils enough to make it worth while to treat Whist-teaching as a calling. The experiment thus far (which we may mention has only been made between ladies) has revealed the fact that the number of people who want to play Whist, both in summer and winter, is very large, and is probably increasing; and also that a very large proportion of those who have been playing the greater

part of their lives are really ignorant of what is called scientific or modern Whist, as moulded by such great masters as "Cavendish" or Pole. Then, too, a very large proportion of those who play either the old or the new game, whether to oblige friends by "taking a hand," or to help to pass dull days or dull evenings, suffer year after year from a consciousness of incapacity, and consequently from a sense of humiliation, from which they are eager to escape by obtaining competent instruction.

It is often said, in general terms, that the way to learn to play Whist well is to play with good players. This is in part true, but it is mainly delusive. There is, to many persons, not much use in seeing what good players do, without knowing the reasons why they do it, and this good players are not ready to give, and in fact the rules of the game forbid their giving it while playing. All the instruction the unfortunate Whist-dunce receives while actually playing, he is apt to get from the contemptuous reproaches of his partner, or the contemptuous silence of his opponents after each hand. But it is not very profitable to know that you have been playing the part of an ignoramus without knowing how you showed it. In fact good players play Whist for their own pleasure, and never will, or can be, induced to mingle with their play a little kindly help for beginners or incapables. Their feeling towards them is rarely anything but one of annoyance at their appearance in a rôle for which they have no fitness. Some of the books even contain special directions for acting with stupid partners without any sacrifice of one's own comfort. All this makes a teacher of Whist—that is, somebody who will deal

tenderly with poor players, tell them why they have blundered, and what they ought to have done and did not do, in a spirit of kindness or even commiseration—wear the air of a ministering angel, and we should venture to predict, therefore, that the most successful teachers will be, as indeed they are now, women.

The reasons for the increasing popularity of Whist, and consequently increasing desire to learn it, are not, we think, far to seek. It is not only a game of skill, like Chess, and therefore does not impose the severe strain on the nerves which makes Chess an impossible game in the evening to poor sleepers, especially if they are very fond of it. Moreover, although Whist makes a constant demand on the attention and the memory, it makes it through constant changes of situation, which keep the faculties on the alert without severely tasking them. It is therefore very welcome to people who suffer from somnolency after dinner, or people who are thrown much together without having anything particular to say to each other, or who are thoroughly familiar with each other's views on everything worth talking; and, above all, to people who have lost or have never acquired the habit of steady reading, or whose eyesight will not bear books. This class—the class who, for one reason or the other, cannot read books in the evening—is a very large one, and one which newspaper reading is increasing enormously. The newspaper rarely asks any one to keep his attention fixed more than a minute or two on one topic, unless by way of narrative; and a man who has read nothing but newspapers for a few years finds, by the time he reaches middle life, that he can neither read a book nor play any game of pure skill. For him

Whist is a great boon. It keeps him wide awake, and has just chance enough in it to treat him every few minutes to small surprises. It in this somewhat resembles a game common in England—of guessing during a ride or drive what there is at the other side of the next hill—in which the Duke of Wellington used to say he had passed all his military life. That is, you are pretty sure not to be wholly right, but you are also sure never to be very far wrong, and your errors are certain to be excusable enough to be interesting, and even sometimes flattering. The problems Whist present are, indeed, very like those which meet people in the course of a quiet, uneventful life, such as questions of dress, of housekeeping, of farming, or jaunting. They require close attention to, and memory for, details, and just philosophy enough for the chapter of accidents. Whist has none of the mental anxiety or harrowing regrets or self-reproaches of Chess. There is always chance enough in it to save one's self-love, but not enough to furnish the wild excitement of Poker or Baccarat or *Rouge et Noir*.

Besides the people who cannot read, Whist is useful to that other very large class who hate to be alone, and yet when in company have nothing particular to say. Sitting with one's fellow-creatures in silence is always very depressing, and sometimes very awkward. The situation among men is mitigated somewhat by smoking. To be sure, smokers need to talk, but they do not need to talk as much as people who have nothing to do but twirl their thumbs. But smoking is of no value in a company composed in part of women or of non-smokers. There must be some other refuge from sheer vacuity, and Whist furnishes it better than any

other amusement. Hence people who shine, or think they shine, in conversation, often dislike it, or, if they take it up, seldom make good players. It keeps their stories and good things out of the market, and, indeed, their mental discursiveness and activity are a positive hindrance to their success. But we doubt if any man, whatever his special powers or accomplishments in other fields might be, has ever become a brilliant Whist-player without taking great pride in it, and without being ready to sacrifice to it almost any other form of social enjoyment.

TEACHING LADIES WHIST.

Mr. James Payn, in one of his amusing "Notes from 'The News'" (Chatto and Windus), records his experience in this attempt:—

"I have tried to teach young ladies Whist myself. Of course I played (and I venture to hope there was reciprocity in the stakes) for love, but with rather unsuccessful results. They did not say, as I once heard a well-known philosopher observe, when compelled to make up a rubber, 'I protest at starting against any inference being drawn by my partner from any card I may happen to play,' but it was evidently on that understanding that they proceeded. Unlike him, however, they always professed to know the game. 'We are not scientific players, you know, as we want to become; but we have family Whist at home.' 'Do your people play the penultimate?' I

once inquired of one of them. 'Not that I know of,' she answered (very sweetly, but with some of that amazement which is so deprecated in the marriage service). 'Sophie plays the piano, and Julia the harp; but none of us play the penultimate.' It was one of my chief difficulties that I could not prevent my pupils' thoughts from straying from the matter in hand to distant spheres. I could never make them perceive the conventional invitation for trumps. 'You didn't notice my ask for trumps?' I would sometimes delicately observe, when all had been lost through that neglect. My fair partners would only smile (which, however, I need not say, was recompense enough for me), and shake their pretty heads. One of them replied, 'I never heard you.' My best pupil used to boast that she could always see a 'picture-peter,' but she couldn't. As for asking for trumps themselves, to give you an idea of how they grasped the meaning of it—not that they were stupid (they were as sharp as needles, only some other magnet than the game of Whist was always attracting them)—one of them once said to me, 'Why should I have asked? I had plenty of them.' In Milwaukee—whose Whist club is, we are told, the largest in the West—its lady professor may not have had these difficulties to overcome; or, as is very probable, she was much sharper with her pupils than I ever dared or wished to be; but her experience with them would be very interesting, and, for once, a novel contribution to the great female educational movement."

VARIETIES OF PLAYERS: BAD PARTNERS.

Mr. James Payn, the novelist (himself an ardent and distinguished Whist-player), in one of his amusing paragraphs in *The Illustrated London News*, describes some partners who make you suffer:—

"There is the thoughtful partner, whose mind is in a chaotic state, who fingers every card in the pack, and finally selects the wrong one.

"Then there is the musical partner, who plays an overture on the green board, imagining that it is a piano, and after a brilliant overture comes a most unsatisfactory performance.

"Then there is the artful man, who plays false cards in order to deceive his adversaries, which he may do, but at the same time he bewilders his miserable partner, whom he proceeds to thunder at because he does not understand his vagaries.

"Then there is the nervous partner (I feel deeply for him), who, if he makes a mistake, is so impressed by its enormity that his head is turned into a humming top, and his play becomes wildly incoherent.

"Then there is the partner who begins rubbing his forehead, as if by any imaginable possibility intelligence of any kind can be transmitted from that quarter.

"Then, worst of all, is the betting partner, who, directly he has got his money on, assumes a warlike and defiant demeanour, and the slightest mistake of his frightened companion is treated with infinite scorn."

AVERAGE PLAYERS.

To the Editor of THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS.

There are a class of persons commonly described as "fair average Whist-players." You may have met them; if not you will recognise them from the following description: They have mostly played Whist, or think they have, for from thirty to one hundred and twenty years. I don't think I have come across more than three who have exceeded the latter period, and even they were exceptions—they despise any one who has read a book on Whist and consider him mechanical, themselves being bound hand and foot to half-a-dozen cast-iron rules, mostly wrong. I heard one of them rejoicing once that Mr. Clay was dead, on the mistaken ground that he did hope now he had heard the last of him. They detest "Cavendish" still more, though how he has injured them, who have never seen his book, it is difficult to say. They are intensely superstitious, believe in numerous fetiches, and when they lose a rubber at once attribute it to some malignant influence of the cards and seats; if they have deliberately thrown it away themselves they are still of that opinion. With regard to their play—

1. They lead singletons when weak in trumps and the game in no apparent danger; if they make a trump, which they might have done with equal certainty when the suit was led by somebody else, they are apparently much gratified; the effect on the mind of their partner is of no consequence.

2. With two small trumps and a bad hand they lead a trump and assign, as a reason, that their adver-

saries are at three, and that is the only way to save the game.

3. When second player they never omit to ruff a certain trick of their partner's if weak in trumps, on the ground that it is the only chance of making a trump, thereby loudly announcing their weakness to their adversaries, and preventing their partner from developing any game he may have; even if moderately strong in trumps there is no certainty that they will not do this.

4. They pass a winning card of the adversaries, if there is any possibility of being over-ruffed.

5. They usually trump any winning card of their partner's below a ten, and below a seven invariably, whether any one else followed suit the round before or not, unless very strong in trumps, when they will trump nothing for any consideration; they would sooner lose the game.

6. They decline to return their partner's trump for several curious reasons. (1.) Because an honour being turned up to their right it is impossible to do so. (2.) Because they won with a queen and were afraid of killing their partner's king. If they won with a knave because the entire strength of trumps must be with the right-hand adversary—the triumphant way in which he will make this remark is in itself almost enough to prove the average Whist-player. (3.) Because they are able to ruff the suit on account of which their partner led trumps. (4.) Because they thought their partner had no more, and many similar reasons.

7. If with king, queen, and another of their partner's lead they make the queen, they will care-

fully wait for hours to make the king. Those of them who, by many years' practice, have become skilful in annoying their partner, play their king first and then wait; but they are a rather superior class.

8. With the adversary leading trumps they open a new suit every time they get in.

9. They occasionally notice their partner's discard, but are compelled to lead that suit because they have a ten ace in it, and only two small ones in the suit asked for.

10. If by any chance they see a call for trumps, they always select the card most likely to deceive their partner as to what trumps they hold.

Now will you kindly explain to these worthy people that all this is really not Whist, and that a better style of play might easily be acquired by, say, six hours a day steady practice for ten or fifteen years, without any necessity for reading any book at all.

You may inquire why, if they pay no attention to Moses and the Prophets, they should attend to you? Why, I am unable to say, but there is the undeniable fact that they do draw some line between a book and a periodical. In abstruse disputes, such as what is a revoke—is it a misdeal? they never think of looking at the rules of Whist, they don't believe in them, but they are always ready to refer the matter to THE WESTMINSTER PAPERS. Again, I have often seen the average player with the Papers in his hand; that he was reading them I am not certain, but that shows they are not repugnant to his feelings; and I really think that if you were to put the matter to them nicely, they might alter their play to some extent, and it is quite unnecessary to specify what any alteration must be.

PEMBRIDGE.

THE CLUB CODE.

The Rubber.

1. The rubber is the best of three games. If the first two games be won by the same players, the third game is not played.

Scoring.

2. A game consists of five points. Each trick above six counts one point.

3. Honours, *i.e.*, ace, king, queen, and knave of trumps are thus reckoned:

If a player and his partner, either separately or conjointly, hold—

(1.) The four honours, they score four points.

(2.) Any three honours, they score two points.

(3.) Only two honours, they do not score.

4. Those players who, at the commencement of a deal, are at the score of four, cannot score honours.

5. The penalty for a revoke takes precedence of all other scores. Tricks score next; honours last.

6. Honours, unless claimed before the trump card of the following deal is turned up, cannot be scored.

7. To score honours is not sufficient; they must be called at the end of the hand. If so called, they may be scored at any time during the game.

8. The winners gain—

(1.) A treble, or game of three points, when their adversaries have not scored.

(2.) A double, or game of two points, when their adversaries have scored less than three.

(3.) A single, or game of one point, when their adversaries have scored three or four.

9. The winners of the rubber gain two points (commonly called the rubber points) in addition to the value of their games.

10. Should the rubber have consisted of three games, the value of the loser's game is deducted from the gross number of points gained by their opponents.

11. If an erroneous score be proved, such mistake can be corrected prior to the conclusion of the game in which it occurred, and such game is not concluded until the trump card of the following deal has been turned up.

12. If an erroneous score affecting the amount of the rubber be proved, such mistake can be rectified at any time during the rubber.

Cutting.

13. The ace is the lowest card.

14. In all cases every one must cut from the same pack.

15. Should a player expose more than one card, he must cut again.

Formation of the Table.

16. If there are more than four candidates, the players are selected by cutting, those first in the room having the preference. The four who cut the lowest cards play first, and again cut to decide on partners; the two lowest play against the two highest. The

lowest is the dealer, who has choice of cards and seats, and, having once made his selection, must abide by it.

17. When there are more than six candidates, those who cut the two next lowest cards belong to the table, which is complete with six players; on the retirement of one of those six players, the candidate who cut the next lowest card has a prior right to any after-comer to enter the table.

Cutting Cards of Equal Value.

18. Two players cutting cards of equal value (for partners), unless such cards are the two highest, cut again. Should they be the two lowest, a fresh cut is necessary to decide which of those two deals.

19. Three players cutting cards of equal value cut again. Should the fourth (or remaining) card be the highest, the two lowest of the new cut are partners, the lower of these two the dealer; should the fourth card be the lowest, the two highest are partners, the original lowest the dealer.

Cutting Out.

20. At the end of a rubber, should admission be claimed by any one, or by two candidates, he who has, or they who have, played a greater number of consecutive rubbers than the others is or are out; but when all have played the same number, they must cut to decide upon the outgoers. The highest are out.

Entry and Re-entry.

21. A candidate, wishing to enter a table, must declare such intention prior to any of the players having

cut a card, either for the purpose of commencing a fresh rubber or of cutting out.

22. In the formation of fresh tables, those candidates who have neither belonged to, nor played at, any other table have the prior right of entry; the others decide their right of admission by cutting.

23. Any one quitting a table prior to the conclusion of a rubber may, with the consent of the other three players, appoint a substitute in his absence during that rubber.

24. A player cutting into one table whilst belonging to another, loses his right of re-entry into that latter, and takes his chance of cutting in as if he were a fresh candidate.

25. If any one break up a table, the remaining players have the prior right to him of entry into any other; and, should there not be sufficient vacancies at such other table to admit all those candidates, they settle their precedence by cutting.

Shuffling.

26. The pack must neither be shuffled below the table, nor so that the face of any card be seen.

27. The pack must not be shuffled during the play of the hand.

28. A pack, having been played with, must neither be shuffled by dealing into packets nor across the table.

29. Each player has a right to shuffle once only, except as provided by Rule 32, prior to a deal after a false cut, or when a new deal has occurred.

30. The dealer's partner must collect the cards for the ensuing deal, and has the first right to shuffle that pack.

31. Each player, after shuffling, must place the cards properly collected and face downwards to the left of the player about to deal.

32. The dealer has always the right to shuffle last; but should a card or cards be seen during his shuffling, or whilst giving the pack to be cut, he may be compelled to re-shuffle.

The Deal.

33. Each player deals in his turn; the right of dealing goes to the left.

34. The player on the dealer's right cuts the pack, and, in dividing it, must not leave fewer than four cards in either packet. If, in cutting or in replacing one of the two packets on the other, a card be exposed, or if there be any confusion of the cards, or a doubt as to the exact place in which the pack was divided, there must be a fresh cut.

35. When a player whose duty it is to cut has once separated the pack, he cannot alter his intention; he can neither re-shuffle nor re-cut the cards.

36. When the pack is cut, should the dealer shuffle the cards he loses his deal.

A New Deal.

37. There must be a new deal—

(1.) If, during a deal or during the play of a hand, the pack be proved incorrect or imperfect.

(2.) If any card, excepting the last, be faced in the pack.

38. If, whilst dealing, a card be exposed by the dealer or his partner, should neither of the adversaries have touched the cards, the latter can claim a new

deal; a card exposed by either adversary gives that claim to the dealer, provided that his partner has not touched a card. If a new deal does not take place, the exposed card cannot be called.

39. If, during dealing, a player touch any of his cards, the adversaries may do the same, without losing their privilege of claiming a new deal should chance give them such option.

40. If, in dealing, one of the last cards be exposed, and the dealer turn up the trump before there is reasonable time for his adversaries to decide as to a fresh deal, they do not thereby lose their privilege.

41. If a player, whilst dealing, look at the trump card, his adversaries have a right to see it, and may exact a new deal.

42. If a player take into the hand dealt to him a card belonging to the other pack, the adversaries, on discovery of the error, may decide whether they will have a fresh deal or not.

A Misdeal.

43. A misdeal loses the deal.

44. It is a misdeal—

(1.) Unless the cards are dealt into four packets, one at a time, in regular rotation, beginning with the player to the dealer's left.

(2.) Should the dealer place the last (*i.e.*, the trump) card face downwards on his own or on any other pack.

(3.) Should the trump card not come in its regular order to the dealer; but he does not lose his deal if the pack be proved imperfect.

(4) Should a player have fourteen cards, and either of the other three less than thirteen.

(5.) Should the dealer, under an impression that he has made a mistake, either count the cards on the table or the remainder of the pack.

(6.) Should the dealer deal two cards at once, or two cards to the same hand, and then deal a third; but if, prior to dealing that third card, the dealer can, by altering the position of one card only, rectify such error, he may do so, except as provided by the second paragraph of this law.

(7.) Should the dealer omit to have the pack cut to him, and the adversaries discover the error prior to the trump card being turned up, and before looking at their cards, but not after having done so.

45. A misdeal does not lose the deal if during the dealing either of the adversaries touch the cards prior to the dealer's partner having done so, but should the latter have first interfered with the cards, notwithstanding either or both of the adversaries have subsequently done the same, the deal is lost.

46. Should three players have their right number of cards, the fourth have less than thirteen, and not discover such deficiency until he has played any of his cards, the deal stands good; should he have played he is answerable for any revoke he may have made, as if the missing card or cards had been in his hand. He may search the other pack for it or them.

47. If a pack, during or after a rubber, be proved incorrect or imperfect, such proof does not alter any

past score, game, or rubber; that hand in which the imperfection was detected is null and void; the dealer deals again.

48. Any one dealing out of turn, or with the adversary's cards, may be stopped before the trump card is turned up, after which the game must proceed as if no mistake had been made.

49. A player can neither shuffle, cut, nor deal for his partner without the permission of his opponents.

50. If the adversaries interrupt a dealer whilst dealing, either by questioning the score, or asserting that it is not his deal, and fail to establish such claim, should a misdeal occur, he may deal again.

51. Should a player take his partner's deal and misdeal, the latter is liable to the usual penalty, and the adversary next in rotation to the player who ought to have dealt then deals.

The Trump Card.

52. The dealer, when it is his turn to play to the first trick, should take the trump card into his hand; if left on the table after the first trick be turned and quitted, it is liable to be called. His partner may at any time remind him of his liability.

53. After the dealer has taken the trump card into his hand, it cannot be asked for; a player naming it at any time during the play of that hand, is liable to have his highest or lowest trump called.

54. If the dealer take the trump card into his hand before it is his turn to play, he may be desired to lay it on the table; should he show a wrong card, this card may be called, as also a second, a third, &c., until the trump card be produced.

55. If the dealer declare himself unable to recollect the trump card, his highest or lowest trump may be called at any time during that hand, and, unless it cause him to revoke, must be played; the call may be repeated, but not changed, *i.e.*, from highest to lowest, or *vice versâ*, until such card be played.

Cards Liable to be Called.

56. All exposed cards are liable to be called, and must be left on the table; but a card is not an exposed card when dropped on the floor, or elsewhere below the table. The following are exposed cards:—

(1.) Two or more cards played at once.

(2.) Any card dropped with its face upwards, or in any way exposed on or above the table, even though snatched up so quickly that no one can name it.

57. If any one play to an imperfect trick the best card on the table, or lead one which is a winning card, as against his adversaries, and then lead again, or play such winning cards one after the other, without waiting for his partner to play, the latter may be called on to win, if he can, the first or any other of those tricks, and the other cards thus improperly played are exposed cards.

58. If a player or players, under the impression that the game is lost or won, or for other reasons, throw his or their cards on the table face upwards, such cards are exposed, and liable to be called, each player's by the adversary; but should one player alone retain his hand, he cannot be forced to abandon it.

59. If four players throw their cards on the table face upwards, the hands are abandoned, and no one can

take up his cards. Should this general exhibition show that the game might have been saved or won, neither claim can be entertained unless a revoke be established. The revoking players are then liable to the following penalties: they cannot under any circumstances win the game by the result of that hand, and the adversaries may add three to their score, or deduct three from that of the revoking players.

60. A card detached from the rest of the hand so as to be named is liable to be called; but should the adversary name a wrong card, he is liable to have a suit called when he or his partner have the lead.

61. If a player who has rendered himself liable to have the highest or lowest of a suit called fail to play as desired, or if, when called on to lead one suit, he lead another, having in his hand one or more cards of that suit demanded, he incurs the penalty of a revoke.

62. If any player lead out of turn, his adversaries may either call the card erroneously led, or may call a suit from him or his partner when it is next the turn of either of them to lead.

63. If any player lead out of turn, and the other three have followed him, the trick is complete, and the error cannot be rectified; but if only the second, or the second and third have played to the false lead, their cards, on discovery of the mistake, are taken back. There is no penalty against any one excepting the original offender, whose card may be called, or he or his partner, when either of them has next the lead, may be compelled to play any suit demanded by the adversaries.

64. In no case can a player be compelled to play a card which would oblige him to revoke.

65. The call of a card may be repeated until such card has been played.

66. If a player called on to lead a suit have none of it, the penalty is paid.

CARDS PLAYED IN ERROR, OR NOT PLAYED TO A TRICK.

67. If the third hand play before the second, the fourth hand may play before his partner.

68. Should the third hand not have played, and the fourth play before his partner, the latter may be called on to win or not to win the trick.

69. If any one omit playing to a former trick, and such error be not discovered until he has played to the next, the adversaries may claim a new deal; should they decide that the deal stand good, the surplus card at the end of the hand is considered to have been played to the imperfect trick, but does not constitute a revoke therein.

70. If any one play two cards to the same trick, or mix his trump or other card with a trick to which it does not properly belong, and the mistake be not discovered until the hand is played out, he is answerable for all consequent revokes he may have made. If, during the play of the hand, the error be detected, the tricks may be counted face downwards, in order to ascertain whether there be among them a card too many; should this be the case, they may be searched and the card restored. The player is, however, liable for all revokes which he may have meanwhile made.

THE REVOKE.

71. Is when a player, holding one or more cards of the suit led, plays a card of a different suit.

72. The penalty for a revoke—

(1.) Is at the option of the adversaries, who, at the end of the hand, may either take three tricks from the revoking player, or deduct three points from his score, or add three to their own score.

(2.) Can be claimed for as many revokes as occur during the hand.

(3.) Is applicable only to the score of the game in which it occurs.

(4.) Cannot be divided, *i.e.*, a player cannot add one or two to his own score, and deduct one or two from the revoking player.

(5.) Takes precedence of every other score, *e.g.*, the claimants two, the opponents nothing, the former add three to their score, and thereby win a treble game, even should the latter have made thirteen tricks and held four honours.

73. A revoke is established if the trick in which it occurs be turned and quitted, *i.e.*, the hand removed from that trick after it has been turned face downwards on the table, or if either the revoking player or his partner, whether in his right turn or otherwise, lead or play to the following trick.

74. A player may ask his partner whether he has not a card of the suit which he has renounced. Should the question be asked before the trick is turned and quitted, subsequent turning and quitting does not establish the revoke, and the error may be corrected, unless the question be answered in the negative, or

unless the revoking player or his partner have led or played to the following trick.

75. At the end of a hand, the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks.

76. If a player discovers his mistake in time to save a revoke, the adversaries, whenever they think fit, may call the card thus played in error, or may require him to play his highest or lowest card to that trick in which he has renounced. Any player or players who have played after him may withdraw their cards and substitute others; the cards withdrawn are not liable to be called.

77. If a revoke be claimed, and the accused player or his partner mix the cards before they have been sufficiently examined by the adversaries, the revoke is established. The mixing of the cards only renders the proof of a revoke difficult, but does not prevent the claim, and possible establishment of the penalty.

78. A revoke cannot be claimed after the cards have been cut for the following deal.

79. The revoking player and his partner may under all circumstances require the hand in which the revoke has been detected to be played out.

80. If a revoke occur, be claimed, and proved, bets on the odd trick or on amount of score must be decided by the actual state of the latter after the penalty is paid.

81. Should the players on both sides subject themselves to the penalty of one or more revokes, neither can win the game; each is punished at the discretion of his adversary.

82. In whatever way the penalty is enforced, under

no circumstances can a player win the game by the result of the hand during which he has revoked; he cannot score more than four.

Calling for New Cards.

83. Any player (on paying for them), before, but not after, the pack be cut for the deal, may call for fresh cards. He must call for two new packs, of which the dealer takes his choice.

General Rules.

84. Where a player and his partner have an option of exacting from their adversaries one of two penalties, they should agree who is to make the election, but must not consult with one another which of the two penalties it is advisable to exact. If they do so consult, they lose their right; and if either of them, with or without consent of his partner, demand a penalty to which he is entitled, such decision is final.

85. Any one (of the players), during the play of a trick, or after the first cards are played, and before, but not after, they are touched for the purpose of gathering them together, may demand that the cards be placed before their respective players.

86. If any one, prior to his partner playing, should call attention to the trick—either by saying that it is his, or by naming his card, or, without being required to do so, by drawing it towards him—the adversaries may require that opponent's partner to play the highest or the lowest of the suit then led, or to win or lose the trick.

87. In all cases where a penalty has been incurred, the offender is bound to give reasonable time for the decision of his adversaries.

88. If a bystander make any remark which calls the attention of a player or players to an oversight affecting the score, he is liable to be called on, by the players only, to pay the stakes and all bets on that game or rubber.

89. A bystander, by agreement among the players, may decide any question.

90. A card or cards torn or marked must be either replaced by agreement or new cards called at the expense of the table.

91. Any player may demand to see the last trick turned, and no more. Under no circumstances can more than eight cards be seen during the play of the hand, viz., the four cards on the table which have not been turned and quitted, and the last trick turned.

EXAMPLES OF SCORING.

(Rule 10.)

(*From Professor Hoffman's "Book of Card and Table Games."*)

If A, B win a treble, and X, Y two doubles, then X, Y win three points, viz., $2 + 2 + 2^* = 6 - 3$.

If A, B win a treble, and X, Y two singles, then X, Y win one point, viz., $1 + 1 + 2^* = 4 - 3$.

If A, B win a double, and X, Y two trebles, then X, Y win six points, viz., $3 + 3 + 2^* = 8 - 2$.

The figure with an asterisk affixed indicates, in each case, the value of the rubber.

A HINT ON "CUTTING OUT."

(Rule 20.)

Major-General Drayson, in his *Art of Practical Whist*, makes a useful suggestion how to avoid a very common cause of dispute:—

"In most cases, but particularly when the table consists of five players, it is as well to write on paper the roster, so that it can be at once decided who is out:—

A
B
C
D
E

are the players, and A, B, C, D, play first. The next player to come in is E, and the first player out, decided by drawing, we will suppose is B. A, C, and D next draw, and A is out, then C and D draw, and C is out; the roster would then be as follows:—

E
B
A
C
D

D goes out after the rubber into which he has gained entrance by drawing with C. E, B, A, and C play a rubber, then E goes out, then B, and so on. When a long evening's play occurs this roster prevents any dispute as to whose turn it is to go out, and when no record is kept of the rubbers it is often a fruitful cause of disputes to decide whose turn it is to quit the table. Every precaution ought to be used to prevent any cause for discussion at Whist."

ETIQUETTE OF WHIST.

(*From* JAMES CLAY'S "*Treatise on Short Whist.*")

"The following rules belong to the Established Etiquette of Whist. They are not called laws, as it is difficult, in some cases impossible, to apply any penalty for their infraction, and the only remedy is to cease to play with players who habitually disregard them:—

"Two packs of cards are invariably used at clubs; if possible this should be adhered to.

"Any one, having the lead and several winning cards to play, should not draw a second card out of his hand until his partner has played to the first trick, such act being a distinct intimation that the former has played a winning card.

"No intimation whatever, by word or gesture, should be given by a player as to the state of his hand, or of the game.*

* "Cavendish" observes that the question "Who dealt?" is irregular, and if asked should not be answered.

"A player who desires the cards to be placed, or who demands to see the last trick,* should do it for his own information only, and not in order to invite the attention of his partner.†

"No player should object to refer to a bystander, who professes himself uninterested in the game, and able to decide any disputed question of facts, as to who played any particular card—whether honours were claimed, though not scored, or *vice versâ*, &c.

"It is unfair to revoke purposely; having made a revoke, a player is not justified in making a second in order to conceal the first.

"Bystanders should make no remark, neither should they, by word or gesture, give any intimation of the state of the game until concluded and scored, nor should they walk round the table to look at the different hands."

DUMMY.

Is played by three players.

One hand, called Dummy's, lies exposed on the table.

The laws are the same as those of Whist, with the following exceptions:—

1. Dummy deals at the commencement of each rubber.

2. Dummy is not liable to a penalty for a revoke, as

* Or who asks what the trump suit is.

† A player who holds queen of a suit in which his partner has led king, should not extend his hand to take the trick before fourth hand has played. This is a distinct intimation that he knows his partner has the ace, and therefore that he himself holds the queen.

his adversaries see his cards. Should he revoke and the error not be discovered until the trick is covered and quitted, it stands good.

3. Dummy being blind and deaf, his partner is not liable to any penalty for an error whence he can gain no advantage. Thus he may expose some or all of his cards, or may declare that he has the game or trick, &c., without incurring any penalty; if, however, he lead from Dummy's hand when he should lead from his own, or *vice versâ*, a suit may be called from the hand which ought to have led.

DOUBLE DUMMY.

Is played by two players, each having a Dummy or exposed hand, for his partner. The laws of the game do not differ from Dummy Whist, except in the following special law:—There is no misdeal, as the deal is a disadvantage.

MANUALS OF THE GAME OF WHIST.

1. "THE LAWS AND PRINCIPLES OF WHIST, Stated and Explained, and its Practice Illustrated on an Original System by means of Hands played completely through." By "CAVENDISH." London: Thomas De la Rue & Co.

This has been the most popular work of the day on Whist. The Author and Messrs. De la Rue were the first to introduce the graphic and beautiful system of

showing "hands" by card figures printed in colour—a mode far superior to any mere typographical notation.

The work has attained more than twenty editions, extending to upwards of seventy thousand copies.

See also "CAVENDISH'S" books on "Whist Developments," and "Whist Perception," &c.

2. "HOW TO PLAY WHIST. With Forty Fully Annotated Games." By "Five of Clubs" (RICHARD N. PROCTOR). Longmans & Co.

We have already referred to the merits of this admirable Manual. (*See* the Note on page 312.)

3. "THE ART OF PRACTICAL WHIST." By "MAJOR-GENERAL DRAYSON," late R.A., F.R.A.S.

In a series of letters, the Author describes every part of the Game and the best method of becoming a skilful player. The book has passed through several editions. It is a very lucid Manual and one well worthy the attention of the Whist student.

4. "THE BOOK OF CARD AND TABLE GAMES." Edited by PROFESSOR HOFFMANN. London: George Routledge & Sons.

This comprehensive manual, by far the best of its kind, is an excellent up-to-date book on Card Games of all kinds, as well as Billiards, Chess, Draughts, &c. It does not of course supersede the full and special Manuals of Whist previously mentioned, but is a thoroughly well-digested, all-round cyclopædia, in which the Editor has been assisted by able contributors.

*** The famous "Treatise on Short Whist," by JAMES CLAY, must always remain a "classic" in every Whist Library.

GLOSSARY OF THE TERMS USED IN WHIST.

ACE, THE.—The spot card of each suit. It counts highest in honours but lowest in cutting.

ACE, SECOND, &c.—Ace with one other card. In the same way, king second, queen second, &c. With two cards, we say ace three; with three, ace four, &c.

BLUE PETER, THE.—A signal for trumps. This term is employed when a high card is *unnecessarily played instead* of one of a lower denomination, followed by a smaller card of the same suit. Such as a ten for a seven, or a five for a deuce, &c.

BUMPER.—Winning two games running before the adversaries have scored.

COMMAND OF A SUIT.—Holding the best cards of a suit. Refer to *Establish*.

CONVENTIONAL SIGNALS.—Modes of play conveying information to your partner concerning your hand, its numerical strength particularly.

CROSS RUFF.—Refer to *See-Saw*.

CUTTING IN.—Selecting partners at the commencement of a rubber and deciding who shall deal.

CUTTING OUT.—Deciding by the lowest cards cut which of two persons shall remain in, when one or two are required to go out.

DEAL, THE.—The distribution of the cards, one by one, from left to right.

DEAL, FRESH.—When an accident entitles you to deal again.

DEAL, LOST—MISDEAL.—The forfeiture of the deal

is the result of an error coming under what is recognised as misdeal according to the laws.

DISCARD.—The card you play when you cannot follow in a suit and do not trump it (if a plain suit).

DOUBLE.—Scoring five points before your opponents win three.

ECHO, THE.—Asking for trumps in response to your partner's signal. The echo means that you hold at least four trumps.

ELDEST HAND.—The player on the dealer's left-hand.

ESTABLISH.—To establish a suit is to exhaust the best cards in it which are against you, and retain its entire command.—Refer to *Command.*

FALSE CARD.—Playing a card against rule for the purpose of deceiving your adversary.

FINESSE OR TO FINESSE.—To endeavour to take a trick, or to keep the command of a suit, by playing, when second or third to play, a card lower than some one or more cards in your hand, and not in sequence with it, or them, on the chance that the intermediate card, or cards, may be with your right-hand adversary.

FORCING, TO FORCE, OR A FORCE.—To play a card which forces some player either to trump it, or to lose the trick. Thus you force your adversary with a winning card; your partner with a losing one.

FOURCHETTE.—The two cards, one on either side of a card led,—thus, king and knave make the *fourchette* to the queen led; queen and ten make the *fourchette* to the knave.

GAME.—Scoring five points.

GUARDED.—The second best card of a suit is said to

be "guarded" if you hold a small one to play against the best card. Two "*guards*" are generally required for a third best card.

HAND.—The thirteen cards held by each player. The entire play of all the four hands of each deal is also called a hand.

HOLDING UP.—Not winning a trick when you can, *e.g.*, king led, second player having ace does not put it on.

HONOURS.—Ace, king, queen and knave of trumps.

KING CARDS.—The highest card unplayed of a suit. Thus, if the ace and king were out, the queen would be the king card.

LEAD, THE.—The commencement of the play by the person on the dealer's left—or the card played by the winner of a trick immediately after having won it.

LEADER.—The first to play each round.

LEADING THROUGH AND UP TO.—When playing first you are said to lead *through* your left-hand adversary, and *up to* your right-hand adversary. Sometimes the expression *down to* is used.

LONG CARDS.—The last cards of a suit held in one hand.

LONG SUIT.—That of which you held originally more than three cards. The term, therefore, indicates strength in *numbers*.

LONG TRUMPS.—The last trumps held in one hand.

LOOSE CARDS.—Those of any plain suit, which from the strength of the other hands are useless.

LOSING CARD, A.—A card which will not take a trick in its suit.

LOVE.—Nothing scored.

LOVE GAME.—A game won in which one side does not score at all.

MAKE.—To *make a card* is to win a trick with it. To *make the cards* means to shuffle them.

OPENING.—The plan on which the game is begun.

PARTIE, A.—The same players playing two rubbers consecutively; or, should it be necessary, a third—in order to decide which has the best of the three.

PENULTIMATE, THE.—The lowest card but one of a suit led. It is the conventional signal that you hold more than four cards of the suit thus led.

PETER, THE.—Refer to the *Blue Peter*.

PLAIN SUITS.—Those which are not trumps.

POINTS.—The score made by tricks or honours. For each trick after six a point is scored.

QUART.—A sequence of any four cards.

QUART À MAJOR.—A sequence of ace, king, queen and knave.

QUINT.—A sequence of five, the quint major being the sequence of the five highest cards of a suit.

QUITTED.—A trick which has been gathered up, turned on the table and left.

RE-ENTRY.—A trick won at an advanced period of the hand. Securing you the lead.

RENOUNCE.—Playing a card of another suit than that which has been led—holding none of the latter.

REVOKE.—Playing a different card from the suit led, while it is in the player's power to follow suit.

RUBBER.—Two games won consecutively, or two out of three games constitute winning the rubber.

RUFF, OR TO RUFF, OR TO TRUMP.—To play a trump to a suit in which you are wholly deficient.

SAW OR SEE-SAW.—Partners each trumping a suit and leading to each other for the purpose. This is also called Cross-ruff.

SCORE.—The points marked—by coins, counters, or "Whist-markers."

SEQUENCE.—Three or more consecutive cards in order of value. A sequence of three cards is a *tierce*, of four a *quart*, of five a *quint*. Ace, king, and queen are called *tierce-major*. Ace, king, queen and knave, *quart major*, and so on. Other *tierces*, *quarts*, &c., are called after the card which heads them, as a *tierce*, *quart*, &c., to a king or to a queen, &c. An *under-sequence* is one at the bottom of the suit. An *intermediate* sequence is one neither at the top nor the bottom of the suit.

SHORT SUIT.—A suit of three cards or less.

SIGNAL FOR TRUMPS.—Playing an unnecessarily high card, following it by a smaller card of the same suit. Refer to "Blue Peter."

SINGLE, A.—Making game after your adversary has scored either three or four.

SINGLETON.—One card only of a suit.

SLAM.—One side winning all the tricks.

STRONG SUIT.—One which contains more than an average number of *high cards*.

TENACE.—The best and third best card left in any suit, as ace and queen, which is the major tenace. If both these cards have been played, the king and knave become the tenace in the suit, and so on.

TIERCE (OR TERCE).—A sequence of any three cards.

TIERCE-MAJOR.—The sequence of the three highest cards of a suit.

TREBLE.—Scoring five before your adversary scores one.

TRICK, A.—The four cards played to a round, viz., the lead led, and the three cards played to it.

TRUMP CARD, THE.—The card turned up by the dealer.

TRUMPS.—Cards of the same suit as that turned up by the dealer.

UNDER-PLAY.—The leader playing a small card, though he holds the best of the suit. It differs from finessing in that the object is not to take the trick with the smaller card, but to conceal the possession of the higher card or cards so as to use them afterwards more effectively.

WEAK SUIT.—One which contains less than the average number of *high cards*.

YOUNGER HAND, THE.—The player to the right of the dealer.

SOLO WHIST.

BY ABRAHAM S. WILKS.

The modern compiler of Whist and its literature can no longer ignore its young and vigorous rival, Solo Whist. A development of the classic game, through the evolutionary stages of Boston and Ghent Whist, it was originally introduced into England *viâ* the United States of America and Flanders about the year 1856 by a family of Dutch Jews, and for the following twenty years outside Jewish circles it was comparatively unknown. Since then its popularity has spread to such an astonishing extent that it is rare nowadays to find a card-player to whom it is unfamiliar. To some, however, Solo Whist is still but a name; more particularly to a certain section of the conservative adherents of Whist proper who have hitherto tabooed the newcomer. It is to be hoped that a more intimate acquaintance with the game and its methods and principles may induce them to accord it an experimental welcome at least.

In the following paper will be found an epitomised description of Solo Whist and the way to play the calls; and, in addition, the most comprehensive, up-to-date code of laws yet published. As part of a work on Whist it has not been considered necessary to repeat principles of play where Solo follows the old Whist lines, and the deviations have alone been dilated upon.

It may interest the old Whist votary to know that, should he desire to try the new game, he has at the start an immense advantage over the general run of

Solo Whist-players who have had no Whist training. The most brilliant exponents of Solo Whist I ever met were all accomplished Whist-players.

Two objections are occasionally raised to Solo Whist, neither of which is insurmountable. The first is that it is a gambling game. So is Whist if you fix the stakes above your means. Play for modest stakes, and never declare above the value of your hand. The second objection is that Whist should be silence, and that the conversation entailed by the calls is liable to be abused. Let the objector observe and insist upon one inflexible formula in declaring, neither a word more nor less, and the difficulty is removed.

The reader who desires a further insight into Solo Whist will find every phase of the game exhaustively treated in "How to Play Solo Whist," published by Messrs. Chatto & Windus, and written by the late George Frederick Pardon and myself.

The Game.

Solo Whist can be played with two, three, or four players. When five persons sit down to play, the one to the right of the dealer takes no part in the current round, either in respect to playing or the payment of stakes. Pools or "kitties," should not be formed when there are five players. The regular and best form of Solo Whist is with four players.

An ordinary pack of fifty-two cards is used, and these are dealt out *three at a time* to each player in rotation, beginning with the person to the dealer's left. When forty-eight cards have been dealt, twelve to each player, the remaining four are dealt singly, the

last one of all being turned up to indicate the trump suit as at ordinary Whist.

Every game of Solo Whist is played with a certain object in view, and that object is declared in advance. This announcement is known as a "call," or "declaration." There are six objects or calls in Solo Whist, each of which has a different scope and value. They are here given in order, beginning with the lowest:—

1. PROPOSITION (OR PROPOSAL) AND ACCEPTANCE.—For two declaring players in partnership to make eight or more tricks between them. The partners do not necessarily sit opposite one another, as at ordinary Whist, but may perhaps be side by side, their original positions in which the proposal and acceptance took place. The first caller, the player to the left of the dealer, may accept a proposition after having originally passed, as he would otherwise be debarred the chance of accepting; but in every other instance a player who has once passed cannot accept or make any other declaration.

2. SOLO.—For the player who calls to make not less than five tricks out of his own hand, the other three players being opposed to him.

3. MISÈRE.—The attempt by the caller not to take a single trick. There are no trumps in a misère.

4. THE ABONDANCE.—For the declaring hand to make not less than nine tricks against the other three players, the caller selecting any suit he pleases for trumps, but not announcing such selection until it has been ascertained that no other player can make a superior call, the trump suit then being specified. An abondance with the original turn-up suit announced

as trumps takes precedence of an abondance in a strange suit, and should it so supersede another abondance the overcall must be announced as in the original trump suit.

5. MISÈRE OUVERTE.—The same as a misère, but after the first trick has been played the caller must expose his remaining twelve cards on the table face upwards.

6. ABONDANCE DÉCLARÉE.—This is the highest call at Solo Whist, and the caller has to make the whole thirteen tricks. There are no trumps, every suit being of equal value, and the caller always leads out first, no matter where he sits; and as he cannot possibly make overtricks, he does not have to pay for undertricks should he be defeated, but is liable for the stakes only, the game being over immediately he loses a trick.

Every round at Solo Whist is played to attain one of the preceding six objects, and every game is thus begun and finished in one deal, there being no scoring or carrying over of points, as at ordinary Whist. All declarations other than proposals and acceptances are known as "solitary" or "independent" calls.

When the cards have been dealt the players in turn proceed to announce what they are able to call, and the highest call so announced becomes the object of that particular game. The person who calls first is the one to the left of the dealer, and he declares, or says "I pass," according to the nature of his hand. If he declares, any following player who cannot call higher must say, "I pass," but in the event of another player making a higher call it supersedes and nullifies the inferior one. But a still superior call might be made, and this would make void any declaration preceding it.

A player who has declared and been overcalled can increase his call over that of his competitor, who has the option of still further raising it, until one of them passes out or the limit is reached. A proposing hand not finding an acceptor can amend his call to anything higher, solo, misère, or abondance; and any caller who has not passed out, even if he be only an acceptor, in the event of being overcalled, can make any still higher declaration he likes to select.

The first player having examined his hand either "declares" or "passes." If the most reasonable chance he sees is that of making four tricks, especially if he has strength in trumps, he says, "I propose," that is, he asks for a partner or acceptor to jointly make eight or more tricks; and any following player who thinks his cards good enough for the combination (but not strong enough for a superior call) says, "I accept," and the game proceeds by the first hand leading out.

But should a following player see a reasonably certain chance of making five tricks he would call a solo, and the proposal and acceptance call would thus be annulled; or, instead of a solo, a misère, or something better might be declared, or they might be called over the solo. In any event, the highest call would supersede all others, and become the object of the game.

When all the players pass, the cards are thrown in and redealt by the next dealer, and at most tables a pool or kitty is formed by each player contributing a certain sum, generally half or quarter the proposal stake, and the first player who makes a successful independent call (not a proposal and acceptance) clears the pool, or, if unsuccessful, doubles it.

Sometimes, instead of throwing up the hands, a "general," or general misère is played, the player taking the last trick having to pay an agreed-upon amount—half the proposal stake as a rule—to each of his three opponents. There are no trumps in a "general."

The Stakes.

The stakes at Solo Whist are settled by pre-arrangement, but a consistently proportionate scale should be observed, both between the respective calls and the calls and overtricks. To illustrate it by what would be known as a one, two, three shilling and threepenny overtrick game (the shillings for the stakes, the threepences for the over or undertricks), each adversary would have to pay to, or receive from propositions or solos one shilling each for the stake, and threepence each for every under or overtrick.

That is, if the proposer and acceptor made eight tricks they would each receive one shilling for the stake, and an additional threepence for every trick they made over eight; but if they failed to make eight tricks they would have to pay one shilling each, with threepence for every trick less than eight. A solo-player making the necessary five tricks would be paid one shilling by each of his three adversaries for the stake, with an additional threepence each for every trick he made over five. If he failed to make five tricks he would have to pay his opponents one shilling each for the stakes and threepence each for every trick he was short of five. The abondance call is reckoned on similar lines, but in misères, open misères, and declared abondances of thirteen tricks, the stakes only

are paid either way, there being no over or under-tricks.

At the one, two, three shilling game the misère stake is two shillings for each player; abondances, three shillings; open misères (always double the price of a misère), four shillings; and the abondance déclarée (always double the ordinary abondance stake), six shillings each. It should be understood that a proposer or acceptor receives from, or pays to, one adversary only.

A very popular arrangement of stakes is that of the sixpenny and penny game: sixpence proposals and solos, one shilling misères, and so on, with penny overtricks. At some tables the price of the proposal and acceptance stake is only half that of the solo; thus proposals one shilling, solos two shillings, misères three shillings, &c.

It is customary to pay double price for overtricks (but not double for the stake) when the declaring side makes a "slam," or the whole thirteen tricks. Thus the proposer and acceptor on making a slam would each receive at the one, two, three shilling and threepenny game three shillings and sixpence each, being one shilling for the stake, and sixpence each for the five double overtricks.

The stakes and tricks are paid at the conclusion of every game.

The Kimberley Game.

What is known as the Kimberley Game, from the locality where it originated, is Solo Whist with the proposals and acceptances excluded. A solo is in con-

sequence the lowest call, and should all the players pass, a pool or "kitty" is formed by each player contributing an agreed-upon amount (sometimes the price of a solo, but mostly only half that sum), the first successful call taking it out, or, if unsuccessful, doubling the pool. At some tables it is pre-arranged that a caller cannot take out or pay into the pool above a stated amount, so as to limit the risk.

The Kimberley Game is played with "flying colours," that is, when all the players have passed, a second chance of calling is given them in the regular order. This second call must consist of a solo of *six* tricks, the caller to select and name his own trump suit, which must not be the original one. A solo only can be called as a second round declaration, and the over or undertricks are calculated from six.

There is one doubtful advantage in the Kimberley Game—it precludes the possibility of players reproaching one another for proposing or accepting on inadequate hands; but the absence of the proposal and acceptance, one of the best features of Solo Whist, debars its adoption by players to whom the scientific and not the gambling interest of the game is of the first consideration.

Solo Whist for Three Players.

There are two ways of playing Solo Whist with three players. The first and better method is to take out the twos, threes, and fours of every suit, and play with the remaining forty cards; the turn-up card, an odd one, not being used except to indicate the trump suit. The second plan is to take away any one suit

and play with the remaining three. There is no odd card here, the turn-up belonging to the dealer. I have seen another plan adopted with the full pack of cards by dealing out a "blind" dummy as a fourth hand, which is neither used nor seen. This, of course, removes it out of the category of Solo, or any other form of Whist, and I only mention it here to warn the beginner against it.

The game for three players is played much on the same lines as that for four, save that there are no proposals and acceptances, a solo consisting of *six* tricks being the lowest call that can be made. The order of precedence and value in calling differs also, and ranges upwards in the following progression: solo, abondance, misère, abondance déclarée, and misère ouverte; and the stakes increase in corresponding order. Thus in a sixpenny and penny game solo would be sixpence, abondance one shilling, misère one and sixpence, abondance déclarée two shillings, and open misère three shillings. It may be mentioned that this is more expensive than the four-handed game, and it is, therefore, advisable to play it for half the usual stakes.

As a consequence of the frequency with which a general pass occurs, it is customary to call solos in flying colours under the same conditions as in the Kimberley Game. The second solo, here, as well as the first, consists of six tricks, and as a second call no other than solo can be declared.

It is a matter of regret that the limited scope of the present treatise will not admit of more than a passing allusion to this form of Solo Whist, for it makes a most fascinating pastime for three players, and calls forth some of the smartest generalship in card play.

Solo Whist for Two Players.

The pack consists of forty cards, the twos, threes, and fours being taken out, and the odd turn-up card not being used except to determine the trump suit. The cards are dealt into three lots as though three persons were playing, the lot dealt first, to the dealer's left, being used as a dummy, and not looked at until a call is settled upon. It is then opened and sorted by the other player and laid exposed on table to the *left of the caller*, whether that be its original position or not. Thus, if the dealer declared, it would remain to his left where it was dealt out; but if the non-dealer called it would be transferred to the dealer's right and the caller's left. The caller's adversary plays the exposed dummy hand in partnership with his own, against the declaration; the hand to the left of the dealer, whether it be dummy or caller, always having the first lead out.

The lowest call is solo (consisting of *five* tricks), the order of progression being solo, abondance, misère, and abondance déclarée. The abondance is twice the price of a solo; the misère three times the price of a solo; and the abondance déclarée four times the price. There is no misère ouverte, the ordinary misère in this game being more exposed than in any other form of Solo Whist, for not only are all the caller's cards known, but the cards of both of his adversaries also. So that unless the misère be invulnerable there is but a remote chance of victory.

This game is played with "flying colours," as with three players. Solo in the second suit, as in the first, being of *five* tricks, and dummy being never looked at

until the call is finally determined on. In default of more than two players, this form of Solo Whist will be found an intellectual and interesting compromise on the regular game.

THE LAWS.—THE DEAL.

1. In cutting for the deal, ace is the lowest card and king the highest. The lowest card takes the deal.

2. Every one must cut from the same pack, and should a player expose more than one card he must cut again.

3. When two or three players cut lowest with cards of equal value, those players must cut again.

4. The pack must neither be shuffled below the table nor so that the face of any card can be seen, nor must it be shuffled during the play of a hand.

5. The cards should be made or shuffled by the player to the dealer's left; but the dealer is entitled to shuffle them finally. They must then be cut by the player to his right, who must divide them into two packets neither of which must contain fewer than four cards, after which the dealer must not shuffle again before dealing.

6. If during the deal a card is found faced, or becomes otherwise exposed, or it is discovered that the pack is incorrect, there must be a fresh deal.

7. While the cards are being dealt out, they must not be touched by any one but the dealer, or any player who has not so touched the cards can demand a redeal; but the demand must be made before he has looked at his own hand or a call has been made.

8. If a player should deal out of turn and no objection be raised before the trump card is turned up, the deal stands good, and the next deal reverts to the player who was deprived of his rightful deal, and the person who dealt out of his turn passes the deal when it next reaches him. If a deal out of turn is discovered before the last card is turned up, the cards must be redealt by the rightful dealer.

9. There is no penalty for a misdeal. The cards are simply redealt by the same player.

10. The dealer must leave his turn-up card on the table until it is his turn to play to the trick, when he should take it into his hand. If it be not taken up before the first card is played to the second trick it becomes an exposed card and can be so called.*

11. After the second trick is turned, the turn-up card must not be named or shown, or it can be subjected to the penalties of an exposed card, and for that purpose must then be left exposed on the table.†

Irregular Declarations.

12. Should a player propose before the right to call reaches him he must withdraw it until it comes to his turn. Should any one else propose he must not accept, but he may overcall the proposal with a solo or anything higher.

13. Should a player declare a solo out of turn, and a person, whose turn it was to declare before the solo-

* It is not usual to exact this penalty.

† Any one may inquire what the trump suit is at any time, except in the case of a misère, when the question as to what was the original trump suit must not be put. (*See* Law 85.)

caller, play a misère, the misère-caller can call a lead of the trump suit the first time his opponents have to lead; but should he then omit to do so he cannot call it afterwards, nor can he call any other suit than trumps. The same ruling applies where a person declares an abondance in trumps out of his turn, and a player, whose preceding right to call has been forestalled, then declares an open misère.

14. A player declaring out of his turn must play the call if he be not anticipated or overcalled, or must pay the stakes. He is exempt, however, should he irregularly propose or accept and find no partner.

15. In the event of a player proposing, and a following player proposing also, the second proposer cannot amend his call to an acceptance without the unanimous consent of his adversaries. Should such consent be refused he may call solo or anything higher, and should he pass, any following player may accept the proposer, failing which the latter may increase his call.

16. A player accepting under the mistaken impression that a proposal has been made, may amend his acceptance to a proposal.

17. Should a player (other than the last hand when no previous call has been made) call an abondance and at the same time announce the trump suit (*i.e.*, before all the other players have passed the abondance call), a player declaring an open misère over him may demand from the first hand a lead of the suit prematurely announced.* This does not apply to where an abondance in the original trumps is called over an abondance in another suit.†

* But not any other suit.

† When the first hand makes a declaration, and is overcalled by an

18. Should a player declare an independent call by mistake he must not be allowed, under any circumstances, to amend it to a proposal or acceptance. He can be required to play it out or pay the stakes, or in the event of no following caller making a superior declaration, a fresh deal without penalty can be made by unanimous agreement. In other cases, where the caller declares incorrectly and rectifies his slip (not to a proposal or acceptance) in what is practically the same breath and sentence (*i.e.*, before a following player has had time to call), it is customary to allow him to play the amended call. This, however, must be by absolutely unanimous consent, failing which he is liable to the penalties as here prescribed.

Irregular Remarks and Intimations.

19. On an independent call, should any remark be made directly or indirectly conveying an intimation as to the state of the hands, such, for instance, as "You had better have proposed" on the declaration of solo—which would be locating a powerful adversary, the caller can demand the offender to pay the stakes to whichever side wins, or he can throw up the hand and claim a redeal. (In misères, *see* Laws 87, 88, 90, and 91.) But should the caller play out a card after such remark has been made, he must abide the issue of the game and cannot claim any penalty. (In misères, *see* Law 107.)

20. Should an opponent of a proposer and acceptor

abondance with the suit irregularly specified, he can, should he increase his call to an open misère, claim the lead of the abondance suit on the *second* round, as he himself has to lead out the first.

suggest by an irregular remark that he has a strong hand, such as "I was going solo," or "I should have accepted if you had not done so," the proposer and acceptor can demand a fresh deal, if neither has played a card after the observation, but they are not entitled to the stakes.

21. If any one, prior to his partner or partners playing, should call attention to the trick, either by saying that it is his, or by naming his card, or without being requested to do so drawing it towards him, an adversary may require that opponent's partner or partners who follow him to play the highest or the lowest of the suit then led, or to win or lose the trick. (In misère, *see* Law 90.)

22. Remarks directing attention to the state of the game are not permissible. Thus, to say of a solo-caller "He has already made four tricks," or, on a proposal and acceptance, "We want every trick to win," entitles the adversary or adversaries to throw up the hand and demand a fresh deal, if neither has played a card after such remark.

23. A partner may refer to the score by counting the tricks on his own side only when it is his turn to play, and then not for the purpose of directing his partner's notice to it.

24. A player may require the other players to draw their cards (*i.e.*, to signify which card they have respectively played in that trick) any time during the play of a trick, or after the four cards are played, and before, but not after, they are touched for the purpose of gathering them together; but this should be done for his own information only and not in order to invite the attention of his partners (in misère, *see* Laws 93

and 94), and the same motive should govern a request to see the last trick, or an inquiry as to what the trump suit is.

25. Should a player who has to play after his partner, or partners, draw his card wholly or partly from his hand before his partner has played, the other side may call upon the partners whose turn to play preceded his (and who have not yet played), to respectively play their highest or lowest in the suit, and demand the offender to play the card so drawn.

26. If a player, other than an independent caller, having the lead draw a second card out of his hand before the first trick is completed,* his partner or partners may be called upon to cover the current trick, or trump if they cannot follow suit.

27. In proposing, players must adopt one uniform phrase, "I propose," and not "prop" at one time, and "propose" or "proposition" at another. All such variations are unfair and to be stringently objected to, as opening the door to collusive and underhand intimations.

When a declaration is made, the next player should simply say, "I pass," or "I go a misère," or whatever the superior call may be. The maker of the higher call may inquire of the inferior declaring hand, "Is it good?" or "Do you go anything better?" but no other remarks in the course of the calls or the game are permissible.

Irregular Number of Cards.

28. When a player or players have announced their declaration, the subsequent discovery of any irregularity in the number of cards in the adversaries' hands does not invalidate the claim of the declaring

* Intimating thereby that he holds winning cards.

player or players, conditionally on their own share being correct. The game must be played out, and the irregular hand must pay the full stakes for himself and his partners, who hold their right number, to the other side, whether that other side wins or loses the call.

29. Should the declaring player or players hold a wrong number of cards, they can demand a fresh deal if the mistake is discovered before a card is led to the first trick, but not afterwards. Should they win the call, they neither receive nor pay; but should they lose it, they must pay both stakes and undertricks.

30. Should a player overcall another declaration, and before a card is played out, it be found that he holds a wrong number of cards, the other hands being correct, his own call becomes void, and the previous caller can then play his declaration, and, whether he wins or loses, the overcalling player with the imperfect hand must pay the amount of the stakes for himself and partners; but should overtricks be made, they must be paid for by the adversaries severally.

31. When both sides have a wrong number of cards, the whole deal is null and void.

Demanding to see the Last Trick.

32. Any player, except the opponents against a misère, may demand to see the last trick turned and no more. Under no circumstances can more than eight cards be seen at one time during the play of a hand, viz., the four cards on the table which have not been turned and quitted and the last trick turned. (In misères, *see* Law 92.)

33. A player cannot demand to see the last two tricks when both have been turned, even if no card has been led out to the next trick; he may refer to the last trick only.

34. The last trick may be seen at any time during the play of the current trick; *i.e.*, either before or after the player making the request has played.

Exposed Cards.

35. All exposed cards, with the exception of those owned by a solo, misère, or abondance-caller, are liable to be called, and must be left face upwards on the table. (In misères, *see* Laws, 96, 97, and 102.)

36. Exposed cards are two or more cards played at once, or any card dropped with its face upwards, or in any way exposed on or above the table—even though snatched up so quickly that no one can name it—or dropped on the floor or below the table so that it can be named.

37. When a card is exposed the other side can:—

Demand its being played when that suit is led, or it is the offender's turn to lead, or, if it be a trump card, prevent its being used for ruffing; or,

On the exposed suit being led, demand * or prevent the play of the exposed card, and this prohibition can be repeated as long as the card exposed remains with the offender; or,

The offender can be called upon to play either his highest or his lowest of the exposed suit (in which case

* Unless it be the offender's turn to lead, when he cannot be prohibited leading the exposed card, except in solo, misère, or abondance calls. (*See* Law 46.)

the exposed card, if not given to the trick under this demand, is at once released from further penalty, and may be taken back into the offender's hand).

38. Should a player expose a card, and failing a demand from an adversary to leave it on the table, take and retain it in his hand without remonstrance, it cannot afterwards be called.

39. A card exposed by a player *after* he has played to the trick can only be called to a subsequent trick, and not to the current one.

40. Should a partner (whether for or against a proposal and acceptance, or in opposition to an independent call), under the impression that the game is lost, relinquish it by throwing his cards face upwards on the table, the other side can claim the stakes, counting each card so relinquished as a trick, and the offender's partner or partners can require him to pay stakes and tricks for them as well as for himself. A partner should not make this demand unless he is actually at a loss by the exposure.

41. Should a player, under the impression that he holds the master-cards, expose them in order to finish the game, he renders them liable to be called; but this penalty should not be exacted by the other side when it is obvious that they could not, in regular play, possibly save any of the tricks claimed.

42. Should a player, under the impression that he holds the remaining tricks, claim them by exposing his hand, and a following player or players, whether partners with him or not, throw up or expose their cards in consequence, any player who has not exposed his cards, can claim the game to be played out, and can call his adversaries' exposed cards, while they in

turn can call any cards exposed on the other side. As in the two preceding laws, it is not customary to enforce this penalty, when in regular play the original offender must make every trick he claimed.

43. Should a card be led or exposed before the final call has been decided upon, the player or players subsequently playing, the declaration can subject the card so led or exposed to the prescribed penalties attached to that declaration; except in the case of a misère, when the exposed card can only be treated similarly to one irregularly led or exposed against a solo or abondance.* (*See* Law 46 and Misère Law 102.)

44. The player of a solo, misère, or abondance does not incur any penalty for exposing his cards, except under Law 59; and Misère Law 104.

45. If the player of an independent call erroneously play a card of a different suit to the lead, but discovers it in time to avoid a revoke, the card so played is not subject to any penalty, unless a succeeding player shall have followed to the trick prior to the correction of the mistake. In the latter event an opponent can then demand its play on the lead of that suit, or can call upon the declaring hand to lead it when it is next the latter's turn to lead, but cannot penalise it further. A player, other than an independent caller, renouncing under similar circumstances, is liable either to have the card called or to be required to play his highest or lowest card to the trick in which he has discarded. (In misères, *see* Law 104.)

* Thus, should a card be exposed before the final call is decided upon, a player could not then call "misère," and claim exemption from all risk in respect to the stakes under the penalty for exposed cards against a misère, as in Misère Law 97.

46. A solo or abondance-caller can, in addition to penalties under Law 37, repeatedly prohibit an adversary who has exposed a card from playing it when the latter takes the lead. (For cards exposed against a misère, *see* Misère Law 97.)

47. Should an adversary of a solo or abondance expose a *trump* card, the declaring hand can (1) while it remains exposed repeatedly call upon him to follow suit or pass the trick (*i.e.*, not to trump), or to follow suit or trump with his *highest* trump, or the one exposed (if he has to trump with his highest, the exposed card gets thereby released from further penalty, and may be taken back into his hand); or (2) on his assuming the lead call upon him to lead, or not to lead the exposed trump. On trumps being led from another hand, the penalties are as usual on the play of the exposed suit. (*See* Law 37.)

48. When a player who has an exposed card has a partner sitting to his right, he must allow a sufficient pause after the latter has played to the trick for an adversary to exact the penalty. If on the lead of the exposed suit the exposed card be too precipitately played, its withdrawal may be demanded, or should another card of the same suit be so given, it is liable to be treated as an exposed card. (*See* Law 56.)

49. Partners may consult as to which of them shall exact the penalty on an exposed card, but not as to what form the penalty shall take. Should the two suggest or demand different penalties, the offender is thereby absolved of all liability, and may at once take his card back into his hand. (*See* also Law 57.)

Cards Played out of Turn.

50. A card led out of turn must be left exposed on the table.

51. Should any player (other than an independent caller) lead out of turn, the other side may either call the card erroneously lead, or may call a suit from the offender or his partner when it is next the turn of either of them to lead (but not afterwards).

52. If two partners sit together, and the first leads out of his turn and is followed by his partner, the former is liable to the penalties for leading out of turn, and the latter can have his card treated as exposed. An adversary following an irregular lead may take up his card again without penalty. Should the trick be completed the error cannot be rectified, and no penalty can be enforced.

53. Should a player lead out of turn when the partners are *vis-a-vis*, and the trick be not completed, the cards played to the irregular lead must be taken up and cannot be called, the leader only being penalised.

54. Should the opponent or opponents of the player who has led out of turn fail to call a suit when it is *next* the turn of the offender or his partner to lead, they forfeit their right to call a suit, and the card led in error can only be subjected to the penalties of an exposed card.

55. When a suit is called, the exposed card is thereby freed, and can be taken up from the table.

56. Should the player whose turn it was to lead have incurred through a partner the liability of having a suit called, and should lead out precipitately so as to

avoid the penalty, the card so played shall be considered as an exposed card, and be subject to the call. (*See* Law 48.)

57. If in a proposal and acceptance a player lead out of turn, and in exacting the penalty from him or his partner one of his opponents demands the lead of one suit and one of another, or one calls for a suit and the other for the play of the exposed card, the offence is thereby purged, and the offender need not play either, but can take the exposed card back into his hand. (*See* also Law 49.)

58. If a player called on to lead a suit have none of it the penalty is paid.

59. Should an independent hand *lead* out of turn and discover his mistake before either of his adversaries have played to the trick, he may withdraw his card without penalty. But if one or two of his opponents have followed his wrong lead, they must take up their cards again (and they cannot be called), and the caller's card must be left on the table, and any one of his adversaries may call upon him to play it when the suit is led, or to lead it when it is next the caller's turn to lead.

It is a breach of etiquette (although there is no penalty attached thereto) for an independent caller to intentionally play out of turn. When he so plays a *best* card the effect cannot be unfavourable to the adversaries; but when he throws a small card under the lead he may be doing so to induce his right-hand opponent to pass the trick, and the latter player should be prepared for such a ruse.

60. If one of the adversaries in a solo, misère or abondance leads out of turn the declaring hand can subject the card so led to the full penalties of an exposed card against an independent hand (*see* Laws

37, 46, and 47), or he can call a suit from the rightful leader, but he cannot exact both penalties. Should he elect to call a suit, and it be that of the card led in error, he can require his three opponents to respectively play their highest or their lowest, or in default to trump, or pass the trick. But should he call a suit other than that of the card led out of turn, he has no power to dictate what special cards shall be played therein to anyone but the offender, whom he can call upon either to follow suit or play his exposed card, or to follow suit or trump. (*See* Law 97.)

61. If a player follow to a lead out of his turn, and before his partner or partners have played, the adverse side may demand of the partner or partners whose turn to play preceded that of the offender, and who have not yet played, his or their highest or lowest cards in the suit led, and in default trump or not trump.

62. If a player who has been rendered liable to have the highest or lowest of a suit called, fail to play as desired, or if when called to lead one suit, lead another, having in his hand one or more cards of the suit demanded, he incurs the penalty of a revoke.

63. A player cannot be compelled to play a card which would cause him to revoke.

64. A suit can only be called once for each offence.

Revokes.

65. The player who revokes at Solo Whist forfeits for every revoke three tricks, which are deducted from the score of his own side and added to that of the opposition. The revoking side, whether it be an independent or combined hand, must, under any circum-

stances, pay the stakes on the game in which the revoke occurs. (*See* Law 74 and, in misères, Law 103.)

66. The penalised three tricks are deducted from the gross score of the revoking side. Should the revoke be made by a declaring hand, and the forfeited tricks reduce thereby the number below that required by the declaration, the deficiency must be paid for as undertricks in addition to the stakes.

Thus, should a proposer and acceptor revoke, and ultimately make eleven or twelve tricks, they would still have left their declared eight tricks after the penal three had been deducted, and would in consequence have to pay the proposal and acceptance stake only. But should they make nine tricks, the three substracted for the revoke would leave only six, and two undertricks would consequently have to be paid for in addition to the stakes. The penalty for a revoke made by a solo or abondance-caller is calculated in a similar way.

67. If the revoking player has to pay the stakes to his opponent as the result of the game itself, quite irrespective of the revoke, his only penalty for revoking is three tricks for each offence.*

68. If the declaring player or players lose their call on a hand in which the other side has revoked, the latter must pay the stakes and three tricks for every revoke.

69. A proposer and acceptor making a revoke must jointly pay all contingent penalties; but should the revoke be made by one of the adversaries (who are involuntary partners) of the proposer and acceptor, the offender must pay the amount of the penalty both for himself and his partner or partners.

* It should be understood that for every revoke three tricks must be paid by each player on the offending side; or in the event of a revoke being made by a solo or abondance-caller, he would have to pay the price of three tricks to each of his adversaries.

70. In all cases of a revoke, other than by a proposer or acceptor, the offender can be called upon by his partners to pay the full consequent penalties for them as well as for himself.

Thus, if the caller of a solo failed to make his declaration, but claimed the game on the grounds of a revoke by the other side, the revoking player would have to pay the stakes and three overtricks each for himself and partners, for the consequences of his offence. But if the solo-caller had made his call irrespective of the revoke, and then claimed three tricks each from the other side as a penalty for the revoke, the offender, as far as his fault was concerned, would only have to pay those three tricks each for himself and his partners, and the stakes and ordinary overtricks would have to be settled by each player on his own account.

71. The exaction of a revoke penalty cannot raise the score to more than thirteen tricks, so that should the side claiming the penal three have made say twelve tricks, the offender would only be liable for one instead of three tricks each for himself and partners.

72. Should a revoke be made at a table where double overtricks are paid for slams, and the exaction of the penalty thereby increases the score of the offender's adversaries to thirteen tricks, they can claim double overtricks for the slam. In such a case the partner or partners of the revoking player must respectively pay the amount of their stakes and such single overtricks as may be due to the other side before the penalty for the revoke is calculated. The offender must then pay for himself and partner the full difference of the amount claimed, *i.e.*, for penal tricks and double overtricks.

73. In cases where a revoke is made by one side, and the other side makes a slam in the ordinary way, and

not by the exaction of penal tricks, no penalty of any kind can be enforced for the revoke.

74. A revoke on either side in a misère, open misère, or abondance déclarée, loses the stakes without any other penalty.

75. A revoke is established if the trick in which it occurs be turned and quitted (*i.e.*, the hand removed from the trick after it has been turned face downwards on the table), or if either the revoking player or his partner or partners, whether in turn or otherwise, lead or play to the following trick.

76. A player may ask his partner whether he has not a card of the suit on which he has renounced, except in a misère. Should the question be asked before the card is turned and quitted, subsequent turning and quitting does not establish the revoke, and the error may be corrected,* unless the question be answered in the negative, or unless the revoking player or his partner or partners have led or played to the following trick.

77. At the end of the hand the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks.

78. If a revoke be claimed, and the accused player or his partner or partners mix the cards before they have been sufficiently examined by the adversaries, the revoke is established.

79. A revoke cannot be claimed after the cards have been cut for the following deal.

80. The revoking player or his partner or partners may, under all circumstances, require the hand in

* A card so renounced must be left on the table to be treated as an exposed card.

which the revoke has been detected to be played out.

81. When both sides revoke, the whole deal is invalidated, and neither side can win.

82. Should one side relinquish the game by throwing up the cards, and it be then discovered that the other side has revoked, the relinquishing side can claim the stakes with an additional three overtricks for each revoke.* When a game is relinquished all the players must expose their remaining cards.

SPECIAL LAWS FOR MISÈRES.

It has been considered desirable to modify one or two of the old rules respecting irregularities in misères. With the exception of revokes, for which the offender invariably has to pay the stakes to the opposition, the offences for which the caller formerly threw up his hand and claimed the stakes are now met by the game being played out in the usual way, and the offender having to pay the stakes to the winning side.

The Payment of Penalties in Misères.

83. Should a player commit an irregularity on account of which the stakes have to be paid as a penalty, the offender must pay for his partners as well as for himself.

The Turn-up Card in Misères.

84. Should the dealer prematurely take the turn-up card into his hand, the caller, and the caller only, may request him to replace it on the table. Should an

* Except in misères, when the stakes only are claimed.

adversary make the request, the caller can throw up his hand and demand a redeal, but no other penalty. Should the caller be dealer, and so gather up the card before his time, any adversary may, without liability, request him to replace it on the table.

85. Should an adversary, after the turn-up card has been gathered into the dealer's hand in the regular way, ask what it was, or what was the original trump suit, or should an opponent volunteer such information, the caller can demand the offender to pay the stakes to the winning side.

Irregular Remarks or Intimations in Misères.

86. No remarks of any kind are allowable after a misère is declared. Thus, should a player say, "I had a solo," or "I also have a misère," or, "I nearly have an abondance," or words to such effect; or make significant inquiries, such as "Who was it called a solo?" or, "I think you proposed"; or should anyone volunteer such information, the caller can hold the offender responsible for the stakes to whichever side wins the game.

On the remark being made the caller at once says, "I hold you responsible for the stakes."

87. If an adversary, *previous to the first card being led out*, inquires, "What were the calls?" or words to the same effect, and no answer be given, the caller can throw up his hand and claim a redeal. But should another opponent give the reply asked for, or should the question be put *after* a card has been led to the first trick, the caller can disclaim all responsibility for

the stakes, which must be paid to the side that wins, in the first instance jointly by the player who put the question and the one who answered it; and in the second instance by the questioner only.

88. When a doubt exists as to the lead the caller only may give the required information; and should any other player so tender it, the caller can hold him responsible for the stakes.* (*See* Law 98.)

89. Should a player be about to lead out of turn, the rightful leader may stop him by saying, "It is my lead"; but should a player so claim the lead in error, or it not being his own turn to lead, prevent by word or gesture another player who was about to lead in error from doing so, the caller can make him responsible for the stakes.† (*See* Laws 98, 99, 100, and 101.)

90. Should an adversary, before a trick is completed, direct attention to a card that has been played by pointing to, or touching it, or by saying, "It is my trick," the caller can demand him to pay the stakes to the winning side.

91. Should an adversary in a misère, by word or gesture, express approval or disapproval of a partner's play, under such circumstances as would be likely to affect the further play of the game—such, for instance, as by inducing him to discontinue or persist in the lead of a certain suit, the caller can claim the offender to pay the stakes to the winning side; but should the

* It is usual and courteous for a misère-caller to inform the table, should they be in doubt, as to where the lead is, but he is not bound to do so.

† A player, whose turn it is to lead, but who is desirous of pausing to consider his play, may say, "It is my lead" in order to prevent mistakes.

remark be of such a character as could in no possible way influence the subsequent play of that hand, such as "I expected as much," on the caller discarding, the latter cannot exact any penalty.

Demanding to see the Last Trick in Misères.

92. During the play of a misère the caller, and the caller only, may demand to see the last trick turned, as laid down by Laws 32, 33, and 34. An adversary in a misère must not re-turn a trick until the conclusion of the hand, except under Laws 100 and 103, or the caller can demand him to pay the stakes to the side that wins.

Placing the Cards in Misères.

93. The *caller* of a misère may at any time during the play of a trick, before the cards are touched for the purpose of gathering it up, but not afterwards, demand the cards to be placed before their respective players.

94. An adversary who has to play to the trick after the caller has played, may, *when it is his turn to play*, but not otherwise, request the caller, and the caller only, to draw his card, should such card be so mixed with the others as to leave a reasonable doubt as to who played it. Should he request the caller to draw it when it is not so mixed up with the other cards; or should an adversary make the request when it is not his turn to play; or should an opponent at any time demand the players generally to draw their cards, the caller can require the player so offending to pay the stakes to whichever side wins.

Gathering the Tricks in Misères.

95. The tricks in a misère must be gathered and taken charge of by the adversary to the right of the caller, and must be kept separate and distinct as in the other calls in Solo Whist. Should the caller claim the stakes on the grounds of a revoke, and it be found at the conclusion of the game that the tricks have become too mixed to enable the revoke to be proved, the caller is entitled to the stakes, which the player who has taken charge of the tricks must pay.

Irregular Play and Exposed Cards in Misères.

96. A misère-caller may expose any or all of his cards, or play out of turn without incurring any penalty.

97. Should an adversary of the caller lead (except under Law 99) or follow out of turn, or expose a card, the game must be played out and the exposed card subjected to the full restrictions imposed on an exposed or irregularly played card, against an independent call (*see* Laws 37, 46, and 60). The offender must, under any circumstances, pay the stakes to the caller, should the latter make the misère, or for the caller to the opponents should he lose it.

98. When there is a halt in the game, in consequence of a doubt as to whose turn it is to lead, any player may ask the caller to place it; but if such a request be made when there is no such hesitation, in order to prevent a player leading out of turn, the person making the request must pay the stakes to the winning side.

99. Should the caller, on being requested to name the rightful leader, refuse or express his inability to do so, and the player whose turn it is to lead still refrains from playing, either of his partners may, after waiting a reasonable interval, lead a card in his stead, and, if the caller does not challenge its correctness before the trick is turned and quitted, the game proceeds in the usual way. But should the latter call it into question, and it be found that the irregularity arose from the default of the legitimate leader, the game must be played out, and the person whose rightful turn it was to lead must pay the stakes to the winning side.*

100. Any player may question the accuracy of the caller should he, by request, name the leader, although the last trick must not be turned to prove it except with the caller's consent; and failing an otherwise satisfactory settlement, the player named by the caller must lead.

101. When the caller on being requested to place the lead names a player who, in consequence, leads a card, and it be subsequently found that that lead was wrong, the game proceeds in the usual way, and there is no penalty for the error.

102. If while the calls are being made a player should prematurely lead or expose one or more cards, and a misère is eventually declared, the misère-caller can demand their play or suppression under the ruling of exposed cards against a solo or abondance. (*See* Laws 37, 46, and 62.)

* It should be distinctly understood that it is only after the caller has been asked to place the lead, and the required pause following on his failure to do so, that a player other than the rightful leader may assume the lead. Failing *both* these conditions a player who led out of turn would have to pay the stakes to the winning side.

Revokes in Misères.

103. When a player, whether it be the caller or one of the adversaries, makes a revoke, the other side can claim the stakes (but no further penalty), which the offender must pay in full. A revoke can be claimed any time during the play of a misère, but the tricks must not be searched to prove it until the game is over, except by the caller, or, by the other side with the caller's permission.

104. If a misère-caller renounce in error, and discover his mistake in time to avoid a revoke, he is not liable to any penalty unless a succeeding hand has played. In the latter case the card wrongly played by the caller must be left exposed on the table, but it cannot be called, and the player who has followed to it can withdraw his card and substitute another without penalty.

105. When a misère is defeated the adversaries who have renounced must immediately expose the remainder of their hands to the caller to satisfy him that no revoke had been made.

Throwing up a Hand in a Misère.

106. Should a player prematurely relinquish the game by throwing his cards on the table face upwards or otherwise, his partners can require him to pay their stakes as well as his own. This claim is not generally made where it is obvious that the offender must take all the rest of the tricks.

Claiming Penalties in Misères.

107. A caller must claim the penalty for an offence

before he plays to the trick in which such offence has been committed; or should it be committed after he has played, before he plays to the next trick, or he cannot exact the penalty afterwards. This does not apply to revokes.

General Laws.

108. If a player demands a penalty to which he is not entitled, he cannot afterwards amend it to a penalty to which he is entitled.

If he is in doubt he can say, "I claim the penalty for exposure," or "for playing out of turn" (or whatever the offence may be), "subject to reference to the code of laws."

109. If a player incurs a penalty, and the person to whom it is due releases him, or omits to claim it, or, in the event of such penalty being exacted, the partners for whom the offender is liable absolve him by each paying his own portion of the forfeit, such concession shall not in any way establish a precedent for any future offence, for which the delinquent shall be fully accountable in the prescribed penalties.

110. The tricks must be kept separate and distinct, both for the purpose of ascertaining the state of the game and for verifying a revoke should one be made.

111. A card is considered played when it is drawn from the hand and placed upon the table face upwards, whether the player has quitted hold of it or not; or when, having been drawn from the hand, it is exposed so that one or more of the players can name it.

112. If a player detect a marked, torn, or imperfect card, he can demand another pack. Should the hands have been dealt out, he cannot demand a redeal with

another pack if he has seen what his cards are, or any player has declared.

113. At tables where pools or "kitties" are formed, to be taken in whole or part by the first successful independent declaration, should the caller claim the game on the grounds of an irregularity by the adverse side (such, for instance, as a revoke), the caller takes the pool, or that proportion of it to which he would be entitled by winning the game in the ordinary way; and the offender must, in addition to his other liabilities, make good in the pool the amount so taken out.

PROPOSALS AND ACCEPTANCES.

Proposals and acceptances are the declared attempt of two players in partnership to make at least eight tricks between them. Should they fail to make eight tricks the call is defeated.

A proposition may be accepted by the player to his left, in which case the partners would sit side by side, or by the next player, in which event they would be *vis-a-vis*, and the call would be played under similar conditions to a game of regular Whist; or by the last caller, when the respective partners would again sit together. Sitting side by side is a position very favourable for the declaring hands, for one is thus enabled to play through both of his adversaries, his partner being last player. What is presumably the most advantageous position is when first hand proposes, and last hand—the dealer—accepts. A proposal from the first hand is indicative either of strength in trumps or winning cards in the three remaining suits, for failing

either of these conditions first hand would pass, as after passing he would still have the first hand privilege of accepting a proposal. A first hand proposal is, therefore, obviously a strong one, and should either the second or third player see a possibility of making three or four tricks he would accept. Both of them passing is indicative, therefore, of weakness, and the strength must necessarily be with the last player, the dealer, one of whose trumps—the turn-up—is published to his partner. The Whist-player will readily understand how impotent the non-callers should be between this powerful combination. Their trumps would be drawn first, and then whichever caller had the lead would proceed to establish tricks in his *longest suit* by the conventional Whist method, holding back master-cards in other suits so as to regain the lead and play the long suit again, until all the adverse strength has been cleared away.

A proposal hand should consist of at least four reasonably certain tricks, which are more valuable if they are distributed among the four suits than if they are all in one. Thus ace, king, queen, jack of trumps would be four certain tricks; but if you were powerless in the other suits you might easily lose the game, as your partner would have to fight two adversaries on the remaining suits, and would receive no help from you. Ace, queen, or king, jack suits are always valuable, either to take tricks, to break an adversary's lead, or to establish your partner's.

An acceptance should consist of at least three tricks fairly certain, with the prospect of one or two more. Sometimes a good acceptance contains only one apparently sure trick, but shows promise of several others.

For instance, king, jack, nine of trumps; ace, queen, ten of hearts; king, jack, and eight of diamonds, and king, jack, nine, seven of clubs is a very fair acceptance either side by side or *vis-a-vis* with the proposer. As an independent hand, it would perhaps only make the ace of hearts; in combination with a partner, it might perhaps make six or seven tricks.

Do not propose on five trumps with only one honour, and no tricks in other suits, and do not accept on it unless two players have passed the proposal. When two players pass a proposition it is fairly safe to accept on a relatively weak hand—not a worthless one—as the proposal is unquestionably strong. And do not propose or accept on one long strong suit such as ace, king, queen, jack, six or seven, no tricks in the other strange suits, and only *three* unimportant trumps. You must here rely wholly upon your partner holding one or two cards of your long suit, which is by no means certain. You cannot establish tricks in it unless trumps are drawn first, and then you have to take the risk of your partner not understanding which is the suit you want led. Should it be your lead out, you could show him your suit by playing the king, and then trumps; but this would incur a double risk, firstly, by having one of the adversaries trump king; and secondly, of drawing what might be the only card of the suit your partner held, in which case if you then led trumps you would probably never make another trick.

The Play of the Proposer and Acceptor.

As the proposer and acceptor presumably hold the majority of the tricks, their policy is to first disarm

their opponents by drawing trumps. There are certain conditions, however, which will be patent to the Whist-player when the trump lead should be avoided. Thus, when on the trump lead one or both adversaries renounce. If you are weak in strange suits you will probably be beaten unless you and your partner can ruff singly, for it is clear that both the proposal and the acceptance were called mainly on trumps. Or, when an adversary is holding up a master-trump in order to bring in an established suit of his own; or, when it is known that there is a long strong suit established in your adversaries' favour. To exhaust trumps here would be fatal should they be able to come in.

When your partner sits to your left do not be afraid to open trumps through him if you have good plain suits, or if you have a strong trump hand.

When your partner sits to your left, and a suit of which you hold a short high sequence, such as queen, jack, ten, is led through you, put on your highest of such sequence. With a sequence of five from the queen put on the lowest of it. In the first instance, if your partner has the ace you enable him to hold it up on the chance of your queen making; in the second case, you wish him to make his ace on the first round, as by the number you hold there is every likelihood of the suit being trumped on the next.

When you are first hand and the dealer is your partner, and you hold the ace of trumps with leading strength in two other suits, it is mostly advantageous to open by leading your weakest suit, on the assumption that that is your partner's strongest. You frequently thus establish it for him. And the dealer should always understand that when the partner on

his left opens the game in this way instead of with trumps, that he holds the ace of trumps, or, if the ace be turned up, the king, and trumps should at once be returned and persisted in.

With the exception of the changed conditions induced by partners sitting side by side, proposals and acceptances are played on the lines of ordinary Whist. You lead from your longest suit and discard from your shortest, and in selecting what particular card to lead you adopt the same conventions as in the classic game. On these points the old Whist votary needs no guidance, and the novice at both games cannot do better than give an attentive consideration to the earlier portions of this book.

Some Hints on Proposing and Accepting.

In declaring, do not as *first speaker* propose unless you have a strong trump hand, or fair trumps with tricks in one or two other suits, or with poor trumps but with several tricks in the other suits. On a moderate or doubtful hand always pass, and should the proposer be a *sound* player, and the others pass, accept him.

In any position do not on a doubtful hand propose if you have an incompetent player on your left, or he is in the habit of accepting on poor cards. If he be a strong player propose, but should you be first hand pass on the chance of ultimately accepting. In proposing and accepting, and, indeed, in making independent calls, a general knowledge of the capacity and peculiarities of the other players makes an important difference in the winnings and losings account.

Neither propose nor accept on weak hands. To accept on a poor hand, because by passing you will have to pay the stake to a stronger combination, and your chance will be better with a presumably powerful partner, is an obvious betrayal of the proposing hand, who probably finds in the player who should rightly have accepted him a dangerous opponent. More unpleasantness at Solo Whist arises from this cause than from any other, and the habitual offender should be unhesitatingly shunned.

Playing against the Proposal and Acceptance.

In playing against the proposer and acceptor the first consideration is to prevent them making a slam (thirteen tricks), for in that case you will have to pay double for the five overtricks; the next is to defeat their call; and to do this you and your partner must make not less than six tricks between you. Sometimes when both the proposal and acceptance are called mainly upon trumps, the adversaries, with the first lead out, make the six tricks right off, but that does not often happen.

When the callers have the opening lead they, as a rule, play trumps, so on the face of it the trump lead should be just what the other side should avoid. Take the extremely improbable case of your holding ace, king, queen, five times trumps, against the callers, and having the first lead out. You could assume that their partnership was based upon tricks in strange suits, and that in order to establish them they would want trumps out of the way. So that by leading trumps you would be playing their game. Of course, if on

their playing trumps (which they would doubtless do immediately they took a trick) you found your partner short, you would, if you saw no chances of ruffing, continue the trump lead, and draw two for one.

But there are several occasions when a trump lead against the callers is necessary. When, for instance, you are first player, and your partner is the dealer—necessarily to your right—who has turned up a king. Here by leading a small trump to him you must establish the king, if it be supported by only one other trump.

Lead trumps when you hold a first-class all-round hand in strange suits, and it may therefore be expected that the proposal and acceptance were both mainly upon trumps, and that the callers will try to cross-ruff or to use their trumps singly; or when they refrain from leading trumps in the usual way; or when your partner is free of trumps, and you can bring down two for one, without impairing your own chances; or when you have best trumps and established tricks in a strange suit.

Never open the game by leading a short weak suit through a partner on your left. With short unimportant trumps the lead of a singleton to a partner on your right frequently enables you to ruff the suit and snatch a trick: otherwise always open with your longest or best suit through your partner.

As first player with a good all-round hand against the proposal and acceptance do not be in a hurry to open from ace, queen; king, queen; or king, jack suits. You want to make every possible trick in them, and that is best effected by letting the adversaries open the suits to you. Select rather a queen or jack

high suit, or even trumps, more especially if your partner be to your right.

When the callers have the last trumps try and get them to fall together. Don't lead suits of which both are free, or one will discard while the other trumps, and they will thus use their trumps singly.

Do not adopt deceptive play without an adequate motive, but when you have a really powerful hand against the declaration, you can assume that your partner must be so weak that, while your misleading play may baffle the adversaries, it will not affect him. Thus refraining as last player from taking the trick when you hold the best card ; taking a trick with the ace when you hold the king, discarding falsely ; or holding back the best trump for an advanced round of trumps, are all justifiable expedients to upset the call.

Although when trumps are declared against you in ordinary Whist you discard from your strongest suit, this principle does not apply to the adversaries of a proposal and acceptance, who, with a foreknowledge of the fact that they are contending against the two powerful hands, must hold every possible trick in reserve. The original renouncement from a short, useless suit should therefore be adhered to ; but do not, if you can help it, unguard a jack suit ; it very often breaks a dangerous lead. But still it is often judicious to conceal your weakness, and then you discard from strength.

Do not be afraid of finessing when its success may mean snatching the game and stakes from your adversaries, and its failure the cost of an extra trick or two.

THE SOLO.

The caller of a Solo has to make at least five tricks, the other three hands playing in combination against him.

A solo-caller sometimes relies upon making his declaration on trumps, or on trumps and tricks in strange suits, or on tricks in strange suits only. The latter call is generally risky, for the trumps being with the adversaries they will probably ruff.

It is mostly the policy of the solo-caller to draw trumps to prevent his strange suits being ruffed or himself over-trumped. Under the following conditions, however, he should avoid the play of trumps :—

1. When he has reason to suspect that the adverse trumps are principally in one hand. Say he has based his call upon ace, king, queen, and three small trumps, and on his leading the ace, one opponent renounces and the other gives the ten. The trump lead should be at once abandoned, for, unless he can ruff with two of his small trumps, he will probably lose them, and with them his call.

2. When the call is mainly upon trumps and length or strength in trumps is to the caller's right.

3. When one of the adversaries is holding up a best trump for an advanced round.

4. When divided strength in trumps is over you to your left. Be on the alert against the player to your left deceiving you into the belief that he has no more trumps by playing an unnecessarily high card under yours.

The success or failure of many solo calls depends

largely upon a correct appreciation of when to lead or when to avoid trumps. With tricks in strange suits it is nearly always advisable to lead trumps, even though you have only small ones or divided head strength in them, such as ace, queen, ten. Two rounds of trumps, in a case such as the latter, will often drive an opponent to ruff with the best trumps and leave the command with you.

Even when in calling you reckon upon making your fifth trick by trumping off, it is still, as a rule, the best game to lead trumps at the first opportunity, as otherwise your opponents, finding you refrain from drawing them, will assume your motive and proceed to take them from you. Thus you call solo on ace, and three small trumps (spades); ace and four small diamonds; ace of hearts only; and ace and two small clubs. Here whatever is led you take with an ace and lead a *small* trump. Hold up your ace of trumps for a subsequent round.

But it sometimes happens that with tricks in strange suits a trump lead is a mistake. Say hearts are trumps, of which you hold two small ones, ace and four small diamonds, ace, king, ten of clubs, and ace, king and five of spades. A diamond is led on which you make your ace. Play off your two aces and kings at once, for should you return a small trump the diamond lead will doubtless be continued and your adversaries will probably clear their hands of one or both of your ace, king suits. If, however, you took your first trick with the ace of one of your ace, king suits you would still be able to come in, and the getting out of a round of trumps would probably be advantageous.

With king, queen suits (without the aces) establish

them by playing off each king at the first opportunity.

With a solo of doubtful strength, and a proposal to your left, accept; the strong hand is over you. With the proposal to your right, go solo; you are over the strong hand.

When a suit is being led of which both you and the player to your left (who holds trumps) are free, if, before trumping in, you can clear your hand of another short suit do so, unless the next player is also freeing himself of the third strange suit on which you rely upon making tricks, in which case finesse a trump. The importance of getting rid of the short suit is easily seen, for should you then trump and be overtrumped you are almost certain to take the next trick —by ruffing, should he lead the suit you have discarded, or by best cards in either trumps or the remaining suit.

Never finesse on a long ace, queen suit with trumps in against you; and never finesse for *overtricks* unless your solo is assured.

With ace, king, jack and others of a suit led through you, put on ace first round and wait to finesse later on.

Should you hold ace, jack and two small cards of a plain suit, and the player to your left opens it by leading out the king, play under the trick, for the leader is evidently playing from a king, queen suit, and the king making may induce him to believe that the ace is with one of his partners, so that should he go on with the suit you must, unless it is ruffed, make two tricks in it. But beware of refusing to cover the king under the following circumstances;—if

an adversary gives a dangerously high card to the king, such as nine or ten; or if he renounces; or if your call depends upon your making the ace; or if you hold more than four cards of the suit. But in the latter case should you hold the last trumps it would still be to your advantage to pass the king on the first round of the suit.

Conceal the nature of your cards as much as you can by taking tricks with the highest instead of the lowest of a sequence. Methods of play which in partnership convey information are here, on an independent call, just what you should avoid.

Foist the lead to your left as often as possible, as it is mostly to your advantage to have it proceed from there. It makes you last player.

The Play against a Solo.

In playing against a solo your first care must be not to establish tricks for the caller in suits of which he does not hold the master-cards. Thus, should he be to your right, you would, by opening from an ace suit, perhaps establish his king; or from a king suit you might be playing up to his ace, queen; in both of which cases you would be giving him a trick which he would probably not otherwise make. When the caller has his solo assured in advance, more especially if it be in trumps, the judicious selection of an adverse lead cannot upset his call, but it can deprive him of overtricks. Solos, however, are not always declared upon invulnerable cards: to make his five tricks the caller, indeed, often relies upon a trick in, say, one of

two king suits, and his prospects in this respect are so much more favourable when the opening lead is at his left, that on a doubtful hand he will often call solo when otherwise he would only propose or accept.*

First hand must, therefore, endeavour to select a non-compromising lead, such as ace, king, or king, queen and others, or, failing these, a queen suit. Sometimes with a hopelessly poor leading hand, such as two suits of five without honours, a single small card in the third suit, and jack and another of trumps, the singleton may be tried. This is sometimes the means of ruffing the caller's king or over-trumping him, but with a more promising alternative it should not be attempted, as opening your weakest suit through your partners as often as not establishes it for the caller.

There are exceptional occasions, however, when the most discreet lead down to the caller would be a trump. Thus, first hand holds king, queen, jack, and deuce of hearts (trumps); ace, queen, and ten of clubs; king, jack, and ten of diamonds, and king, jack and nine of spades, and he proposes. Second and third hands pass; dealer calls solo. The caller undoubtedly has a powerful hand, or he would not have declared with the avowed strength over him, but he is presumably relying upon establishing an ace, queen or king, jack suit on the opening lead; and the least compromising play for the first hand would, therefore, be the king of trumps. As a trump lead down to the solo-caller is seldom adopted, except from divided head strength in

* Such as ace, king, and two small trumps; ace, king, five; king, nine, six, deuce; and king and six. The chances are in favour of one of the king suits being led.

plain suits, the other partners should at every opportunity vary the leads through the caller.

When the caller trumps a suit the next player should give his highest card in it to the lead if he originally held not more than four; if more than four, his lowest. In the first case he wants to clear the suit for his partner should trumps be drawn; in the second he wants to retain command in it for himself. Players should bear this in mind, and not be misled into thinking a partner has no more of the suit because he plays the best, or second best, of it to the caller's ruff.

Discard originally from your shortest and weakest suit. Playing after the caller, with unimportant trumps and, say, king and another of an untouched suit, throw both the latter away. Your partners, seeing your king discarded, should at once change the lead to that suit, even though they still held best cards in the previous one. You may thus be able to ruff the caller's ace, should he have it, whereas if your partners continued with the first suit, the caller would probably ruff too high for you to cover, and then proceed to draw your trumps and make his ace.

For the play of the caller's *vis-à-vis* and his right-hand adversary, the principal points to be observed are:—

1. Play long suits through the caller.

2. Play trumps if the caller, having had the opportunity, has refrained from leading them. (He is evidently trying to make tricks by ruffing, or to finesse on a divided trump suit.)

3. Leave the trick with a partner holding best trumps; and—

4. Where there is no apparent motive to the contrary, lead experimental changes of suits through the caller.

These principles are necessarily subject to modification according to circumstances. Thus, if you had to open through the caller, and held three suits consisting of three small cards each, and ace, queen, and two small cards of a fourth suit, you would not, because it was your longest and strongest, select that suit as a lead. And so if the caller refrained from leading trumps you would not start them if one of your partners were free of another suit, and could ruff the caller's best cards in it, or over-trump him. Nor if you held king and one small trump only; or if you were quite clear of a suit in which the caller probably held tricks.

When a suit is opened through you by a partner, put on your best card.

In leading through the caller select a card of intermediate strength, such as nine or ten in preference to a small one. If the caller plays under, it enables you to retain the lead and continue with it or not at your discretion.

THE MISÈRE.

The declaration of misère is an announcement by the caller that he will not take a trick. When he has to play a card higher than those of his three antagonists he has lost the call, and at once pays the stakes. There are no undertricks to pay for; and there are no trumps, all suits being equal. The turn-up card is left on the table in the usual way until the finish of the first round.

When a player has declared misère his task is relatively easy. He must play his highest inferior cards to the leads—sometimes he finesses over them—and should he get a discard he throws off his most dangerous card. But to decide when to call misère, both with regard to the value of the hand itself, and to inferences from the other calls and the turn-up card, requires some judgment.

In deciding whether he should call misère, one of the principal points for the beginner to remember is, that in any suit he holds without the deuce there is strong presumptive risk. He may have only the trey, or trey with several others in sequence from it, but while the deuce remains unplayed his declaration is unsafe. Of course, if an opponent started the game by leading the deuce, and the caller covered with the trey or anything in sequence, the following players would doubtless have to head the trick, and the other cards of the caller's sequence would then be lowest cards. But an experienced player would not be likely to lead a deuce on the first round of a suit—indeed, it is probable that he would not select a deuce suit to open from at all, so there is just the possibility that before the deuce was eventually led the other players would have renounced all they held of the suit, and the introduction of the deuce would then be fatal.

The presence of one or several high cards in a suit, even honours, is not dangerous when they are protected by the requisite number of lowest cards. For instance, ace, queen, ten, eight, six, four, and deuce of a suit with the caller would be absolutely unbeatable, even though the remaining six cards were held by one opponent. The caller would be able to play under the

lead every time. It should be observed that alternate cards are as safe as cards in sequence, except when the caller himself has to lead from them, and then he leaves a gap which may prove fatal should the intermediate cards be held by one hand, so that if the caller had to lead in the instance mentioned he would be caught.

High cards in a suit should be well protected by low ones. Ace, king, queen are fairly safe if supported by the four lowest, or nearly the lowest, of the suit. But with only the three lowest you would not be caught unless there were four of the suit in one hand against you, a not unlikely contingency, but one worth chancing if the other suits were safe.

Any singleton over a four is dangerous, but even with two singletons, one low and the other fairly high, the call is generally attempted on the chance that the low single suit will be played first, and the other singleton discarded on a subsequent round; besides which there is always the prospect for the caller, even should his risky suit be led, of being able to play his dangerous card under the trick.

Should you be dealer and contemplate calling misère, remember that the attack will be focussed upon your turn-up card, so if it be higher than a four don't declare unless it be well protected.

The declarations prior to reaching the misère hand are frequently useful in determining him whether he shall call or not. Say he holds queen, six, four, deuce of trumps, and solo be declared by the player to his right. This makes the queen fairly safe, for the solo hand doubtless holds ace or king of trumps and plays before the misère-caller; but if solo were declared to

the left of the misère, the solo-caller would play after the misère hand and follow big trumps to small ones, and so eventually force the caller's queen to take a trick.

In following to the lead play your highest under the trick. Sometimes it is necessary to finesse over it, but this should seldom be done unless two players have to follow. To give an instance: A four is opened from your right, and you hold deuce, five, six, and others. If you play the deuce under the trick you leave an adverse trey the lowest card; whereas if you cover with the five, and the next two players follow suit, your low cards are safe no matter how the suit is played.

It is, as a rule, disadvantageous to the caller to be first player, for he has to lead a low safe card while the others follow with big ones, and the lead tends to disclose the whereabouts of the cards in that suit. Say caller leads the deuce, and the king takes the trick. Ace is evidently with the caller, as each player covers the deuce with his highest card, and the king hand therefore proceeds to attack the caller's ace by leading back the suit.

If you are caller, and have to open the game, don't lead a singleton if you have a safe alternative. The adversaries will abandon that lead, and you thus lose a chance of discarding.

A safe lead for the caller is a long low suit, with deuce, trey, &c. Here lead the deuce; or from deuce, four, the four.

Lead the lowest of a sequence from deuce, the highest of a sequence from trey or four upwards.

Discard the high cards of your short suits; it is

useless throwing away from long ones. When two adversaries are renouncing the same suit it is often necessary to discard a single trey or four in it, or they may clear their hands and the third player catch you with the deuce on the first round of the suit.

Playing against a Misère.

In playing against the misère you must bear in mind, firstly, that *the caller has some risky card in his hand or he would have called open misère;* and, secondly, that *if you give him a discard he will throw that dangerous card away.* Your first consideration, therefore, is to give him no chance of renouncing, and for that reason you avoid opening from a long suit, that, on the average of chances, being one in which he is probably short, while your short suit is one in which he presumably has length, or, at all events, in which he is least likely to discard on the first round.

Do not open from a deuce suit, because if you hold deuce and one other, or deuce only, it is only likely to be effective later in the game if the caller happens to have a long run of the suit (one of those dangerous long suits without the deuce referred to before), and your partners are able to free their hands by renouncing before the deuce is led, for, as will be readily understood, they would otherwise have to cover the deuce lead with their big cards.

A long suit with the deuce is very dangerous as an opening lead, as there is a double chance that the caller is free of it, for he may be expected to be short where you are long, and he presumably does not hold a suit without the deuce. The lead of a deuce suit should,

therefore, be reserved for a more developed stage of the game.

Single cards other than the deuce are favourable leads, as you can discard on the return; but should you hold an ace and sit to the caller's left, you would, by leading it, enable him to get rid of his highest in the suit; whereas had it been led by your partners, the caller would have had to play under the trick before your ace came down; and this to a modified extent applies to the lead of any single high card from the left of the caller. When you sit to the caller's right, play the singleton, high or low, unhesitatingly.

Open, if possible, with a low card, and if you do not hold a suit consisting of one or two cards only, lead small from your shortest and lowest suit. Always remember when playing a card of a sequence to give the highest. If this rule be consistently observed it assists the partners to read the game. Thus, if a player leads the ten, he cannot have the jack; and if the next player follows with the seven, he has neither eight or nine, and so on.

If the misère hand has over-called a solo, do not lead the original trump suit, for the solo-caller has a run of it. But should a misère-caller propose, and being unaccepted, amend his proposal to a misère, you may play trumps persistently, for the misère hand has doubtless a long, low run of them, probably without tricks in the other suits, or he would have amended to a solo. You will perhaps not catch the caller on the trump suit, but whoever can follow him up in it will give discards to his partners.

When misère is called by the dealer, his turn-up card mostly becomes an object of attack. If it be

high it is pretty certain to be well protected, but the initiative, as a rule, comes best from the player to the caller's right, who, by leading under the turn-up card, can enable his partners to get rid of their big cards in the suit. If the turn-up be an ace the attack can be started at once, the partner holding a run of the suit retaining a big card to continue the lead on the second or third round. When a deuce is turned up the suit can safely be played until the deuce is given.

Having opened the game in the least compromising way, we now endeavour to ascertain the character of our partners' hands, and, inferentially, that of the caller. Two further important principles must be borne in mind—(1) when the caller has played *under* the trick, the two following players give their highest of the suit; and (2) when a partner discards he throws off his highest card of his shortest suit. At undeveloped stages of the game these rules are almost invariably observed, although later on it may become necessary to vary them, as will be presently explained. Thus, suppose from five, seven, and nine of clubs you lead the five. The caller, sitting to your left, gives the four, the next player the ace, and last hand the six. You now know that fourth hand has nothing higher than six, but may have the deuce or trey, or both. But third hand, with whom the trick remains, has, in conjunction with his own cards, a fairly clear insight into the whereabouts of the suit. He assumes that you led from brevity, that the last player is short, and that the balance must therefore be principally between the caller and himself. Say, he originally held ace, queen,

jack, five times without the deuce. He would play back his queen to find whether you held the king (for being of the same value you would put it on if you had it), and as it did not come down, he would locate it with the caller, and, by continuing the lead, eventually catch him on it.

But suppose that the ace hand held only four clubs and the caller five. He would be unable to catch the latter on his king, but he would give discards to the fourth hand, and on the fourth round to you, the original leader, and thus expose the game still further. Thus, on the second round fourth hand renounces the jack of hearts; he has neither ace, king, queen, or deuce—for it is not good play to discard from a deuce suit, as in the event of it being used to attack the caller it is more likely to be effective if well supported. On the third round fourth player discards six of hearts. He has nothing between the six and the jack, and on the fourth round he throws the king of spades. He has no more hearts—for a player consistently clears his hand of one suit before renouncing in another—and he does not hold the ace of spades. On this, the fourth round, you, the first hand, also have a discard. We will assume that your cards were originally ace, queen, ten, six, spades; queen, ten, nine, hearts; ten, nine, four, diamonds; and nine, seven, five, clubs. The partner to your right has no more hearts, so you throw your queen to clear the ground for the attack in that suit by the leading hand. The latter, however, returns the eight of spades, which means that, despite his partners' discards in hearts, he does not consider that the most favourable suit to lead, or else that the attack in it would come more effectively from his *vis-à-vis*. Fourth

hand gives the nine of spades; you play the ten, caller the seven. With a view of testing whether the third hand wishes to discard, you return the six of spades, caller plays the five, the next hand renounces jack of diamonds, fourth player follows suit with the jack of spades, and leads back the three. You put on the ace, caller the trey, next hand the eignt of diamonds. If the caller holds any risky card it is probably a diamond; you know he holds the four of spades, or fourth hand would have led it instead of the three, so you play the queen, caller follows with the four, your *vis-à-vis* renounces the seven of diamonds, and the fourth player ace of that suit. You then lead four of diamonds, caller covers with the six, next player renounces, and last hand plays under with the trey, thus defeating the call.*

Although, as in the preceding illustration, the play is mostly governed by inferences deducted from the fall of your partners' cards, those played by the caller are frequently of the utmost significance. Thus, suppose you led a king, the caller followed with a deuce, and a partner put on the ace. The caller has played what is practically his highest card, that is, he has either the deuce only or others in sequence with it, and on that suit you cannot force him to take a trick. Or say the caller gave the deuce to your lead of the jack,

* The hands were—first player, ace, queen, ten, six, spades; queen, ten, nine, hearts; ten, nine, four, diamonds; nine, seven, five, clubs. Second hand (misère), king, eight, four, three, two, clubs; six, diamonds; eight, four, two, hearts; seven, five, four, two, spades. Third hand, ace, king, seven, five, three, hearts; ace, queen, jack, ten, clubs; jack, eight, seven, diamonds; eight, spades. Fourth hand, ace, king, queen, five, three, two, diamonds; king, jack, nine, three, spades; jack, six, hearts; six, clubs.

and the two next hands followed with ace and king. Caller *may* hold the queen, but he has no intermediate card or he would have played it, and further initiative in that suit would, therefore, be best left to your partners. Abandon a suit whenever you see a probability of the caller discarding. Carefully observe every card renounced, more especially original ones. An oversight in this respect often gives the caller the game, as it induces you to lead the suit once too often, and so on the very round on which you thought to defeat him you secure his call by allowing him to discard.

It is not always desirable to give discards to your partners. Should you be following up the caller in a suit of which they are both free, and find them simultaneously renouncing one of which you hold none, every card so thrown away would, if led, give you discards on another suit. Say you originally held ace, king, queen, jack, nine, seven of clubs; king, jack, eight, and seven of spades; and king, queen, and five of diamonds; no hearts. One of your partners opens with a club. You take the trick, and on returning clubs both partners discard hearts. If the initiative be left with you, it will apparently be impossible to catch the caller. You therefore at once return the seven of spades, and if your partners read the game intelligently they will understand you to say, "I obviously have clubs with which I could follow up the caller, and I should not relinquish the initiative but for the double reason that I cannot catch the caller on my own cards, and you are throwing away a suit on which I can renounce. I therefore change the lead for you to take the trick and lead hearts." On the lead of hearts you would of course discard diamonds.

Should you hold a single card of a suit, and win the trick on the first round, return your singleton, unless you assume that one or both your partners are short in the original suit, when you should persist in the latter.

Whenever you hold the winning card against the misère-caller, and are desirous of securing the lead, hold back your big cards until your partners have got rid of theirs, as if they are not intelligent players they will very likely fail to appreciate the true state of affairs, and prevent your coming in by covering your tricks. Nothing can well be more exasperating than to hold a card fatal to the caller, and then to see the declaration made after all, because your partners, with no chance of defeating it on their own hands, are too obtuse to see the necessity of letting you come in. Players should always remember that when a partner, in following or discarding, unnecessarily plays first a low and afterwards a high card, thus reversing the usual order, *he wants to take a trick.* But independently of this signalling, whenever you suspect that one of your partners holds a suit dangerous to the caller, be careful to leave the lead with him.

THE ABONDANCE.

The caller of an abondance has to make not less than nine tricks, selecting and naming any suit he pleases as trumps, and although these calls are frequently unassailable in any position, in many instances the declaration has most chance of success when the caller has the first lead, for he can then establish his call by drawing the adverse trumps. This is an important consideration when the declaration is based upon

trumps and a long plain suit, for otherwise the latter is occasionally ruffed before the caller gets a lead; and again, the caller is often compelled to ruin his mastery of the trump suit by ruffing with one of his biggest trumps, to save himself from being over-trumped.

The consideration of not being first hand sometimes debars a player from calling an abondance when he ostensibly holds nine set tricks. Say he has ace, king, queen, jack, ten of clubs; ace, king, queen, jack of hearts, three small diamonds, and one small spade. As first player, and making clubs trumps, his abondance is assured, unless more than five clubs are in one hand against him. But should he be other than first player, and find five trumps with one opponent, he would very likely lose the game if he were compelled to take the first trick by ruffing, for he would leave the long trump with his adversary, who, if he could use it on one of the caller's hearts, would defeat the declaration. Similar considerations apply whenever the caller has a relatively short run of trumps, more especially if he relies upon establishing tricks in suits with divided head strength, such as ace, queen, jack, or a suit without the ace. Without the first lead there is always the danger of his being over-trumped; of having his plain suits ruffed, or of leaving an adversary with a long trump. In fact, whenever he depends upon establishing tricks in plain suits on cards not in sequence, a long run of trumps is indispensable.

When your call is made upon two suits of equal length, consisting of, say, ace, king, queen, jack, and two small hearts, and ace, queen, jack, nine, and two small clubs, make the broken suit trumps. The heart suit is already established, and should you find a

run of trumps against you in one hand, you can use it to force one or more of the latter if necessary. But should you make hearts trumps you would have to establish clubs after drawing trumps, a by no means easy feat with a run of trumps against you in one hand, and king, ten, and two other clubs in another, more especially if you had been originally forced to ruff.

When trumps have not been drawn, and a suit is being led through you, of which both you and a following player are free, clear your hand of a short suit before trumping in, unless he is renouncing your long plain suit, in which case ruff as high as prudence dictates.

Most of the other phases of attack and defence in making an abondance are practically identical with those adopted by a solo-caller.

Don't call a doubtful abondance in the original trumps if you can declare a safe solo instead, but should your solo be over-called by a misère then try the abondance, unless the calls or the turn-up card suggests danger to it. Thus, if you held ace, king, queen, ten, and four small trumps, and ace in a plain suit, and first hand proposed, you might assume him to hold four trumps with the jack, which would probably be fatal to your abondance call. Or say dealer turns up a jack, first and second hands pass, you with the above hand call solo, the risk of the turn-up jack being supported by three more trumps being too great for you to chance an abondance. The dealer calls misère. *Don't call an abondance in trumps over him.* He is almost certain to hold four or five trumps, or he would never have taken the risk of the exposure of his jack in a

misère in the face of your solo call, and you must catch him on the jack if you persistently play trumps other than the ace, king, or queen. And it is more blessed to receive one stake for a misère than to pay out three for an abondance.

Playing against an Abondance.

Holding trumps unguarded lead your shortest suit *down* to the caller; with no trumps your longest. Playing *through* the caller lead your longest. But never open from ace and another, or king and another.

Discard originally from a short, weak, unguarded suit, but if you hold a long ace, king, queen suit, let your original discard be the ace and your next from the valueless suit. The ace indicates your strength and shows your partners that they can discard from it. Except when an ace or king (the latter from king, queen, jack, and others) is renounced, the *original* discard is from weakness, and should invariably be noted, as subsequent discards may be from length and strength.

When a partner originally discards from weakness preserve that suit if you have only a remote chance of making a trick in it. Thus five times with nine or ten highest frequently blocks the caller's lead of his plain suit, and is a far more promising suit to save than one headed by ace, king, queen; for it is not likely that the caller reckoned to make tricks on the latter. When there is no probability of taking a trick in the suit your partner originally discarded, throw it away also as an intimation to your other partner to preserve it.

When you hold tricks in the caller's plain suit you should retain cards in the one he is trumping, so that

each time you take a trick you can force him to ruff and play down to you.

When you have trumped or over-trumped the caller, and still hold another trump with which you hope to ruff, don't lead off ace, king of a suit if you have it, or the caller will trump and draw trumps. Play the smallest card of your ace, king suit on the chance of one of your partners holding the queen and the caller having to follow.

THE MISÈRE OUVERTE.

A misère ouverte is apparently an absolutely safe misère, but its safety is not assured unless every high card you hold is sufficiently protected by a sequence or alternate cards from the deuce, or, in the event of a gap of more than one card, by the presence of a corresponding number of low cards next below it. Thus, a suit without the five, six, and seven would be secured by having the two, three, and four.

A single trey of a suit is dangerous, more especially if you hold a long run of another suit. Say you have the trey of hearts only, and seven times clubs from deuce upwards, and one of your adversaries has five hearts with the deuce, and five clubs. If neither of the other partners holds more than four hearts you must be defeated, for he will play clubs five times and thus enable them to renounce all their hearts, and you will be caught on the trey.

Remember that, except upon the first round, you will have no chance of discarding a dangerous card through your adversaries' ignorance of your hand, as you would in the ordinary misère. Thus, if you held

a suit headed by an ace you would be at once attacked by an adversary holding five with you, whereas in the other misère he would have abstained from leading them because of their length.

With only a small element of risk call an ordinary misère, and, should you be over-called, think twice before you increase it to an open one.

Playing against a Misère Ouverte.

The play against an open misère is, as a rule, fairly obvious even to the novice. The first consideration is, to avoid giving the caller a discard in the first round before his cards are exposed. Don't, therefore, lead from a deuce suit, or from a run of low cards, or from a long suit. One consisting of three intermediate cards, such as eight, nine, ten or thereabouts, is the safest selection. Should the misère ouverte have over-called a solo or an abondance in trumps, don't lead trumps; or, if it superseded an abondance in a suit not announced, lead from any short suit in your hand that was presumably not that of the abondance. Such, for instance, as king, queen, and two others, or queen, jack, and two others.

When you have discovered the caller's vulnerable point, play the game unselfishly and in intelligible concord with your partners, and if you cannot catch the caller on your own hand, stand out of the way of your partners, and avoid blocking their leads.

THE ABONDANCE DÉCLARÉE.

The caller of an abondance déclarée has to make the

whole thirteen tricks, and he has the privilege of having the first lead out, no matter where he sits. There is no trump suit, so that with ace, king, queen, jack of one suit, and the three ace, king, queens of the other suits, the call could not possibly be beaten even if five cards in every suit were with the opposing hands. When the caller loses a trick the game is over at once, and he pays the stakes only—no under-tricks. When a player has this declaration all he has to do is to play out the cards straight away.

Playing against an Abondance Declaré.

This, as a rule, is a mere conventionality. Sometimes the caller has a break in a suit and an adversary holds a sufficient run to capture one of his tricks. It is useless saving ace or king, queen suits, and the first discard should consequently be ace from ace, king, or king from king, queen. The best cards to retain are long low runs such as five times headed by nine, ten, or jack. Save your low runs and throw off from high ones. Remember that it is only necessary to make a single trick to defeat the call, and it should therefore be the aim of every adversary to retain a different suit sufficiently guarded, and should one partner indicate strength by discarding an ace or king, the others should unhesitatingly throw that suit away.

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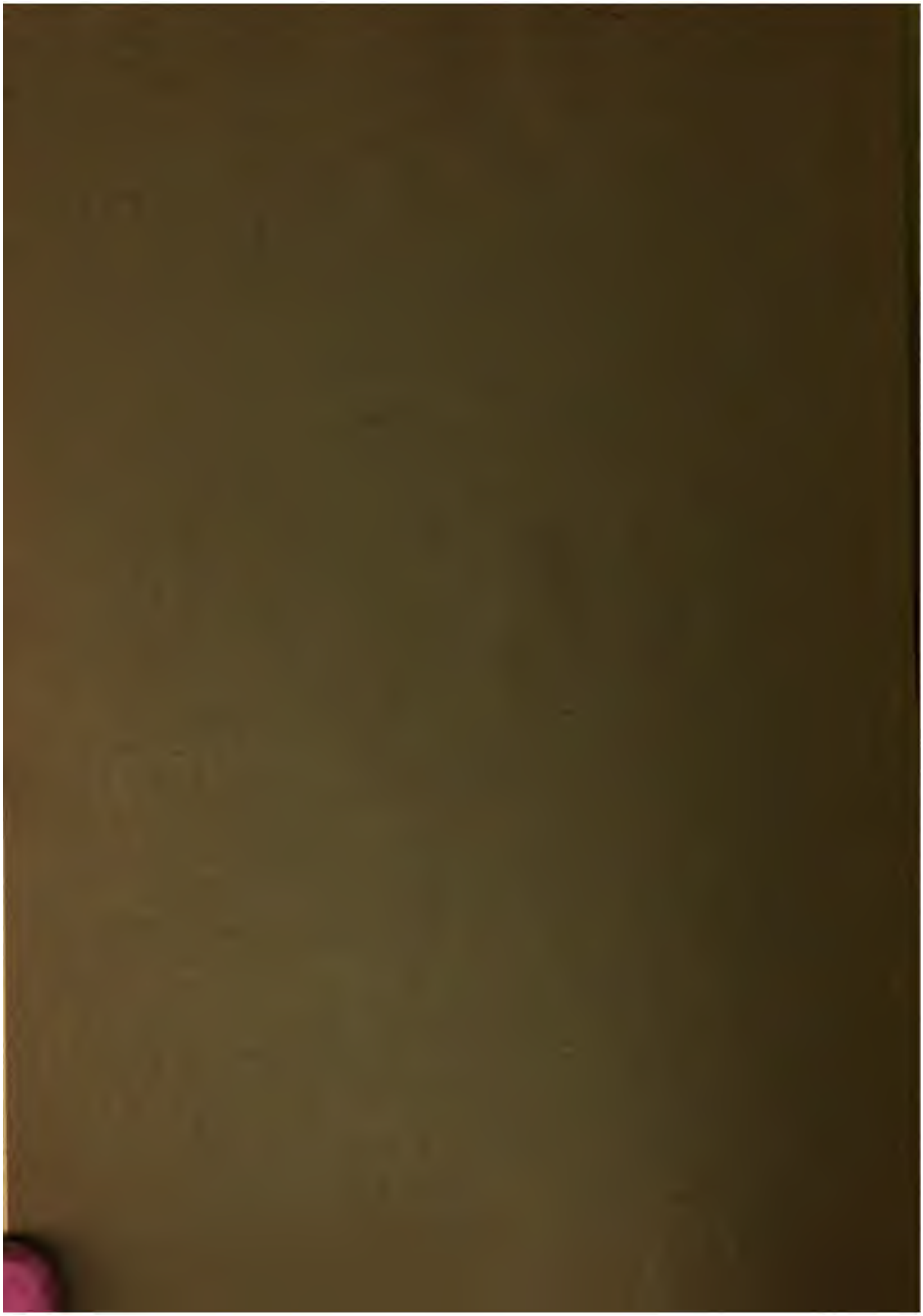

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